

A N
INQUIRY
INTO THE
NATURE OF
TRUE HOLINESS.

WITH
An APPENDIX;
CONTAINING

An Answer to the Rev. Mr. WILLIAM HART's Remarks
on President EDWARDS's Dissertation on the *Nature of*
true Virtue : And brief Remarks on some Things the
Rev. Mr. MATHER has lately published. Also an
Answer to the Rev. Mr. HEMMENWAY's Vindication,
&c.

K
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E R R A T A.

PAGE 70, bottom, read heaven. P. 84, line 21, for *is* r. *are*. For *arises* r. *arise*. P. 92, l. 10, for *truth* r. *virtue*. P. 103, l. 4, from bot. for *has* r. *had*. P. 116, bot. dele the comma after *truth*, and place it after *which*. P. 120, l. 21, for *to* r. *they*. P. 124, l. 21, r. *understand*. P. 126, l. 22, r. *love*. P. 144, l. 12, for H. r. M. P. 150, l. 16, after *all* place a period. P. 153, l. 27, r. *withheld*. P. 157, l. 23, r. *faculties*. P. 162, l. 13, for *a* r. *any*. P. 164, l. 11, for *those* r. *these*. Marg. l. 4. r. *affect*. P. 165, l. 19, for M. r. H—y. P. 166, l. 9, from bot. r. *not a duty*. P. 167, l. 8, r. *doctrine*. Marg. l. 17, for *ver.* 12. r. *viz.* P. 168, l. 1, 2, r. *position*. P. 173, l. 10, dele comma after *by*. P. 196, l. 7, for 4 r. 5.

THE P R E F A C E.

SINCE holiness is, by the confession of all, the sum of all moral excellence, and the highest and most necessary attainment; it is of the last importance that we should well understand it's nature, and distinguish it from all counterfeits. This will help us to understand the bible; to form right conceptions of the divine perfections, and distinguish true religion from that which is false. Wrong conceptions of the distinguishing nature of holiness lead to all kinds of delusion in religion. And, on the other hand, just & clear apprehensions of this are the best preservative from fatal mistakes; and have the happiest tendency to remove the difference and opposition in sentiments, and the sad divisions, so common among professing Christians: And to bring them to 'speak the same thing, and be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.'

The more I have attended to the religious controversies of this day, among us, the more have I been convinced that our different sentiments chiefly originate, either from too great inattention to the nature of holiness, or very different apprehensions about it: And that the real question is, What is God's moral character? What is conformity to it? What opposes it? Were we agreed in this, most of these disputes would subside. In this view, they are far from being trifling, and deserving that neglect and contempt, with which many affect to treat them. But appear interesting, important, and worthy the attention of all.

I humbly conceive there has been too little attention to the nature of holiness, among divines in general; and that a proper and intelligible definition of it is not easily to be found in bodies of divinity, or elsewhere. And most of those who think it a very easy matter to tell what holiness is, and
that

that we are all agreed in this, have been contented with a set of words, which express no distinct ideas; but leave the thing wholly in the dark. They will perhaps say, God's holiness is his purity. If it is asked, in what does this purity consist? The common answer is, in that which is opposite to all sin, the greatest impurity. We have now got what, I think, is the most common definition of holiness. But who is the wiser? This does not help us to any idea of this purity, unless we know what sin is. But this cannot be known, so long as we know not what holiness is: For we do not learn what holiness is, by first obtaining the idea of sin; but we must first know what holiness, or, which is the same, what the divine law is, in order to the knowledge of sin.

Some have attempted to tell what holiness is, by saying, It is not properly a distinct attribute of God; but the beauty and glory of all God's moral perfections. But we get no idea by these words, till we are told what is this beauty and glory. To say, it is holiness, is saying nothing, or that which is no better.

Under a conviction of this too general inattention to the nature of holiness—the great defect in the most common descriptions of it—the importance of distinct and clear ideas of it—that the controversies before us turn chiefly upon this, and will be decided the shortest and best way, by determining what holiness is; I present to the public the following inquiry; hoping it may give some light on the subject, and assist such as are willing to inquire into the nature of holiness, as described in divine revelation: And in the light of this, help them to find on which side the truth lies, in the present controversies.

In this, however, I don't pretend to be an original. President EDWARDS, in his dissertation on the nature of true virtue, has given the same account of holiness for substance, though under a different name, which the reader will find in the following inquiry. All I can pretend to, as an improvement on him, is to have explained some things more fully than he did; and more particularly stated the opposition of holiness

ness to self-love ; and shewn that this representation of holiness is agreeable to the scripture : And to have answered some objections he has not mentioned, and made a number of inferences.

As Mr. Hart had published objections against Mr. Edwards's account of the nature of true virtue, it seemed necessary they should be considered and obviated. This I have done in an appendix, that what puts on the air of controversy might be by itself, and at the same time have the advantage of the foregoing inquiry.

As Mr. Mather had published something respecting self-love, &c. which appeared very contrary to the nature of holiness ; and on this ground objected to Mr. Edwards's account of a holy taste, and to some things wrote by me ; some brief remarks on him are subjoined, to detect the fallacy of his scheme, and shew that his objections are groundless.*

When Mr. Hemmenway's vindication made its appearance, several reasons, the principal of which is mentioned in the introduction, induced me to answer him in an appendix : Whence the book exceeds the size at first proposed.

How

* Some remarks were also intended on what Mr. Dickinson has published in support of the affirmative of the following questions.

' I. Whether blindness of mind, is the primary cause of all wickedness, that there is in the hearts and lives of men ?

' II. Whether the work of regeneration, is wrought in the souls of men, by the supernatural influences of the holy spirit, operating with the gospel, whereby they are enlightened, and enabled to know and love the truth as it is in Jesus ?

But as, on further consideration, it appeared probable that few would admit the extraordinary things he asserts in order to support these propositions, viz. That our first parents, while perfectly holy, admitted the most blasphemous thoughts of God, and really believed them to be just, which we sinners can hardly mention without horror, and that there was no sin in all this. P. 12.—That the angels before they sinned, & while they were perfectly faultless, were ' blinded, through their own fault, by some means or other.' P. 14.—That faith in Christ is the great duty that is commanded in the gospel, and the first act of obedience : And yet must take place before there is any change of heart, as the cause of all obedience.—And since he does not attempt to confute any thing I have said in support of the contrary ; and all he says is really obviated in the inquiry and appendix : I have suppressed the remarks proposed, to make room for an answer to Mr. Hemmenway, which seemed of much more importance.

However disagreeable these disputes are in themselves, and offensive to many, I have the satisfaction to think they have already been of great advantage to truth; and the pleasure of believing they will yet be more so, if protracted. When in this sense, many run to and fro, knowledge will be increased.

There are those, I know, who, in their own apprehensions, dwell in superior light, looking down with pity, if not resentment and contempt, upon those concerned in these disputes, as doing much mischief—contending in the dark about they know not what—disputing about words, &c. And are too wise so much as to read any of these controversial writings, being possessed of the happy talent of determining all these matters without any of this trouble, or much thought. We are willing such should know we do not envy their superior knowledge and wisdom; and think they would not give less evidence of them, were they willing to be at the pains of hearing the matter, before they answer.

The author wishes that peace, truth, and HOLINESS, may be promoted by these efforts: And that they may, in some measure, conduce to bring on the happy æra, when ‘the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall fill the earth, as the waters cover the sea’: And ‘there shall be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO the LORD.’

May every reader remember, that whatever are his speculations, and which side soever of the disputed questions he takes; yet without holiness, no man shall see the LORD. And let him who reads, and is in any measure enlightened, and strengthened in the way of holiness, by what is now offered to his perusal, bless God, and give all the glory to HIM.

NEWPORT,
June 2, 1773.

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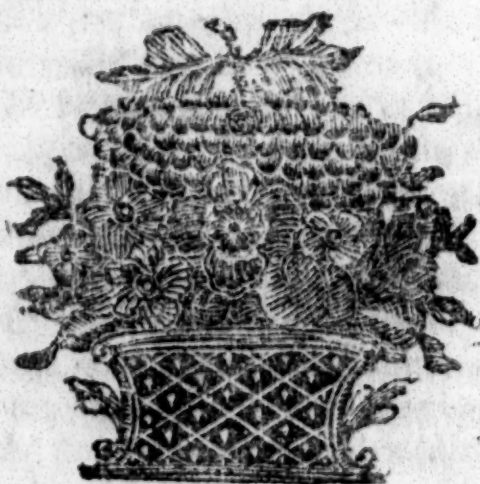
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I. 1732

An INQUIRY into the Na-
ture of
TRUE HOLINESS, &c.

S E C T I O N I.

*SOME general, introductory observations
concerning the nature of true holiness.*

I. **H**OLINESS is, in all respects, perfectly consist-
ent with right reason, and agreeable to its dic-
tates : Or reason, properly exercised and im-
proved, will in all cases, and without fail,
determine holiness to be what it really is. However viti-
ated the taste may be, and the heart disrelish, hate and
oppose true holiness, the same person's reason and judg-
ment may pronounce it to be holiness. Though the
reason of man is liable to be blinded and prejudiced, by
the vicious taste and reigning lusts of his heart, and often
is so to an amazing degree ; yet it is not always and ne-
cessarily so blinded ; but may, and often does, dictate the
truth in this matter ; and always does, when reason is
properly exercised. Hence men of corrupt minds, ene-
mies to holiness in heart and practice, may reason well a-
bout the nature of holiness, and be able to prove what it
consists in, by incontestible arguments. Hence the pro-
priety

B

priety of *reasoning* on this subject. And we may be sure that so far as we reason right, and find what reason dictates, we have found the truth.

II. Holiness is that in which the highest enjoyment or happiness consists; and is really the greatest good in the universe. It, in a sense and degree, puts us in possession of all good. That therefore which gives true enjoyment, and tends to the highest, perfect, universal good of intelligent beings, is true holiness; and nothing else can be worthy of that name.

It is true, that holiness may be the occasion of misery; and a perfectly holy being may not be perfectly happy, in certain peculiar circumstances. As the imperfect holiness of the saints in this life, is the occasion of pain and distress of mind, which no unholy person can have: And Christ, in the human nature, though perfectly holy, was subject to great pain and sufferings. But this is not properly owing to any thing in the nature and tendency of holiness, but the peculiar circumstances which attend it. Therefore those exercises of mind which give a being the highest enjoyment his nature is capable of, and put him in possession of all possible good, and at the same time promote the greatest happiness of the whole, is true holiness. And those exercises which have not this nature, but the contrary, are opposed to holiness.

III. Holiness is the highest possible excellence in the universe. It is that in which the highest and most perfect beauty, and all real worth do summarily consist. 'Tis in such a sense and degree the excellence and perfection of intelligent beings, that without it they have no real excellence, nor any true worth; but they are, in themselves, odious, despicable, and worse than nothing. The more they have of natural capacity, powers and endowments, if they have no holiness, the further they are from all real excellence, and the more hateful; because they, not being holy, are of course more opposed to holiness, or have more of that which is moral evil, than beings of less natural capacities could have.

If

If holiness could be banished from the universe, considered as comprehending Creator and creatures, and should actually cease, there would be no real excellence or worth in universal existence: But it would be in truth infinitely worse than universal nothing. Holiness is the beauty, excellence, brightness, glory and perfection of God, by whatever name it is called. And this is true of all intelligent creatures. Therefore, if we can find what true moral beauty, worth or excellence is, it will determine what is holiness.

IV. Holiness is that by which intelligent beings are united together, in the highest, most perfect and beautiful union. It consists in that harmony of affection, and union of heart, by which the intelligent system becomes ONE, so far as holiness prevails; which fixes every being, by his own inclination and choice, in his proper place, so as in the best manner to promote the good of the whole.— There is no moral beauty or happiness among intelligent beings, without harmony and union of heart. All sin is opposed to this; it sets intelligences in opposition to each other, and spreads the most disagreeable, unhappy discord. But holiness unites them; it consists in the highest and most excellent kind of union in nature. It is the most excellent and perfect bond, by which intelligent beings are, by their own voluntary exertions, united and cemented together, in the strongest and most happy manner. If we can, with any degree of certainty then, determine what affection of heart that is, which thus unites intelligent beings, we may be equally certain that we have found the object of our inquiry, viz. true holiness.

V. Holiness is essentially, in nature and kind, the same thing in all beings that are capable of it. Holiness in God is not different, in nature and kind, from the holiness of creatures. God's holiness differs from the holiness of creatures in degree, and in circumstances, or in mode and form, agreeable to the infinite degree of his existence, and the different manner and circumstances in which he ex-

ists ; but is of the same nature, and so essentially the same thing, in both. We have the greatest certainty of this, in that holiness in the creature is, in scripture, called the image of God, and that by which they partake of the divine nature ; and is represented to be the holy spirit of God, or God's holiness, dwelling and acting in them ; by which God dwells in them, and they dwell in God.

Holiness in different creatures may also differ in some circumstances, and in the particular form and manner of its exercises, owing to their very different state, relations and circumstances. Thus, the holiness of creatures, who never have sinned, is, in some respects, as to the form and manner of its exercises, different from the holiness of those who have sinned, and being redeemed by Christ, are recovered to holiness. And in this lies the difference between what is called legal holiness, and evangelical holiness ; the former being the holiness of angels, and of man before he sinned ; the latter is the holiness of those who are redeemed from among men. This difference might easily be pointed out ; but this will not be attempted here, as we are inquiring into the general nature of true holiness. This, I say, is the same in all creatures ; and therefore has but one and the same rule, the law of God, and consists in conformity to that.

Therefore, if we can find what is the nature of divine holiness, we may be certain that we have found what is the holiness of creatures ; and so *vice versa*. This therefore must be kept in mind, as what may be of use in our inquiry.

VI. True holiness is in its own nature one simple, uncompounded thing. It is not made up of different and various kinds of exercises, properties and ingredients, which may exist distinct and separate, or in any degree independent of each other, and being put together make one compound : But, in opposition to this, is perfectly simple and uncompounded.

This is most certainly true of the divine holiness. And if

if holiness in creatures is of the same nature and kind, being a participation of the divine nature, and consists in the spirit of God imparted to the soul, & dwelling in it, which is the scriptural representation of the matter, as has been observed; then this must be true of creature holiness.

Holiness is in scripture called life: It is indeed the highest and most perfect kind of life. Now life is one simple thing: It is not compounded of different things, and made up of various parts, which differ in nature and kind, and do not imply & involve the whole. This may receive some illustration, perhaps, from animal life. This, as it appears in exercises towards different objects, in various circumstances, and by different senses, sight, taste, hearing, &c. is called by different names; but it is the same simple, uncompounded thing in its nature, and in all its exercises: It is the same animal life, in whatever form or name it appears. Every property and motion, is the motion and property of this same life, and implies the whole. So holiness, though it has obtained different names, as it is exercised in different circumstances, and towards different objects, is the same most simple, undivided spiritual life. This remark may be of use in the inquiry we are entering upon. (a)

VII. The nature and distinguishing properties of true holiness are so clearly described in the holy scriptures, that nothing is needed but to understand the most important truths revealed there, in order to know what true holiness is, as distinguished from all counterfeits. It is one chief end of divine revelation to make known and ascertain the distinguishing nature of true holiness. The great end of divine revelation is to make known the true God to man, and manifest his glory; especially to reveal his moral perfections,

(a) It has been said, that 'virtue is a complex thing: It does not primarily consist in one single disposition, tendency or affection of mind, all other affections rising out of that as their root; but includes various affections, equally original and essential to virtue.' But not the least probable evidence of this assertion has been offered, or even attempted, so far as I have observed. See Mr. Hart's remarks on president Edwards, p. 40, 41.

fections, which is his glory. And this is the same with his holiness; for this is all the moral perfection in the universe. And so far as the bible reveals the duty and happiness of man, which is doubtless done with all possible clearness, and in the wisest and best manner, just so far is the nature of true holiness revealed; for in this both the duty and happiness of man consist. Therefore he only understands his bible, who has learned what is true holiness: And he who is ignorant of the nature and properties of this, is blind to the most leading, important things contained in divine revelation. He knows not God; he is ignorant of the divine law, and the gospel; of Jesus Christ, and his own true interest. The bible is indeed a sealed book to him, and he is in darkness even until now. But he who has a true idea of holiness, knoweth him who is holy in all his works: He understands the gospel, and walketh in the light. This at once shews how important the inquiry is which we are entering upon; and the great help we may expect from the bible, in determining this question; and consequently, the reasonableness and importance of attending constantly to that, in all our inquiries of this nature.

These observations, being kept in view, will greatly help us in our inquiry into the nature of true holiness, and serve as land-marks to direct us. If reason, when properly improved will direct us to it—If it is that alone in which true happiness consists, and which tends to the greatest general good—If it is the highest, the supreme beauty and excellence; that in which all the real worth of intelligences consists, and without which the intellectual, moral world would be infinitely worse than nothing—If it unites intelligent beings together, in the most amiable, happy manner and degree; and is the only bond of such union—If it is, in its nature, one simple thing; so that if we can find what is any one thing which comes into the nature of holiness; or any thing which is properly a branch of holiness, we have found, in that, every thing essential.

sential.—If holiness is the same [in nature and kind, in whatever being it is found—If one chief design of divine revelation is to teach us what holiness is, and it is from the beginning to the end of the bible held up to view in the most clear and intelligible manner, in the best way to give us a true idea of it, as it stands distinguished from every thing else ; so that he who runs may read it (a)—If all this is true, then surely nothing can be more certainly, and with greater ease determined, than the question before us ; as we may be sure, on the one hand, that whatsoever does not agree to all these, is not true holiness, however it may seem to agree to some : And on the other hand, that which is found to bear all these marks, has the divine stamp, and may be safely fixed upon, without any further researches.

S E C T I O N II.

Wherein it is shewed that holiness consists in LOVE.

THE law of God is the standard of all moral rectitude, or holiness. Holiness consists in conformity to this, and in nothing else : Therefore the knowledge of the precepts of the moral law, decides the question before us ; for whatever the holy law of God requires is holiness, and nothing else can deserve the name. Our divine teacher has, in his great wisdom and goodness, given us a summary of the divine law, in the following words : ‘ Thou shalt LOVE the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt LOVE thy neighbour as thyself. Upon these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.’ (b)

Here

(a) See Isaiah xxxv. 8.

(b) Matt. xxii. 37, 38, 39, 40.

Here all obedience to the law of God is reduced to one thing, LOVE; love to God and our neighbour, including ourselves; this is the whole that is required. Therefore this is the whole of true holiness; it consists in this love, and in nothing else. When Christ says, 'on these two commandments *hang* all the law and the prophets,' he must be understood to assert, that the whole of the law and the prophets, all that is required in them, is *love*. All depends upon this; so that if love is removed, all that is required is removed; the law & the prophets come to nothing, and fall to the ground. Take love away, and there is nothing left that is required in the whole of divine revelation. If love was not the whole that the law requires, it could not be said to be wholly *suspended* on this, so as utterly to fall, if love is excluded: For the law would still exist, as there would be yet something commanded.

But if there could be any doubt about the meaning of these words of our saviour, St. Paul has explained them, when he says, 'LOVE is the fulfilling of the law; for *all* the law is fulfilled in *one word*, even in this; thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self.' If *all* the law is fulfilled in love, then this is all that the law requires; for the law is not fulfilled, unless the whole is given which it requires. Therefore love is the whole of that obedience which the law requires. Perfect, supreme love to God, and that love to our neighbour which is implied in it, i. e. loving him as ourselves: This LOVE expressed in all proper ways, which is implied in its being perfect, is the fulfilling of the law; this is true holiness. Therefore the love of God, and keeping his commandments is spoken of as one thing: 'For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.' (b) This could not be, if there was any obedience or holiness, which is not love; or there was any command which required any thing less or more than love.

Thus

(a) Rom. xiii. 10, Gal. v. 14.

(b) 1 Joh. v. 3.

Thus far then we go on sure ground, and have the greatest certainty that holiness consists in LOVE. And all the difficulty in the question before us is in determining what is meant by love; what is the nature and kind of that love which the law requireth. This will be particularly attended to in the following section.



S E C T I O N III.

Wherein it is inquired what that love is, in which all true holiness consisteth.

THOUGH 'tis certain from the holy scriptures that all true holiness consists in love; yet all love is not holiness. If it were, then all men would be holy, and have a great degree of holiness; for we all exercise much love, even in all our volitions and conduct. But it is so far from being true, that all kinds of love, and love to all objects is holiness, that there is a sinful love often spoken of in scripture. Such is the love of them that hate the Lord; (*a*) The love of the world; (*b*) and love of our own selves. (*c*) There is a kind of love therefore which is in its nature contrary to holiness. Of this the world has been full in all ages. It is necessary therefore that we should carefully inquire into the nature and kind of holy love, in order to find the true and proper distinction and difference between that, and the love in which there is no holiness.

Love has been usually distinguished into love of benevolence or good will; love of complacence or delight; love of esteem—and love of gratitude. The love of benevolence is good-will to beings capable of good or happiness, and consists in desiring and pursuing their good, or rejoicing in their possessing it. By benevo-

C

lence

(*a*) 2 Chron. xix. 2. (*b*) 1 Joh. ii. 15. (*c*) 2 Tim. iii. 2.

lence is, I suppose, most commonly meant, that good-will which is exercised towards other beings, in distinction from self-love : But good will is as really implied in self-love, as in the love of others ; for they who love themselves only, exercise good will towards themselves.

Complacence is that affection of the mind in which we are pleased with any object. There is what may be called complacence in benevolence itself, even in all the exercises of it ; being necessarily implied in it. Good-will to any being, supposes a taste for good and happiness, & that we have some good in view, with which we are pleased. If any one wishes well to himself only, this is taking delight in some good, *as his own*. And wishing well to others, implies a taste and relish for the good of others, *as theirs*, and a delight in it, when they are seen possessed of it.

But by the love of complacence, when distinguished from benevolence, is, I think, generally meant, the pleasure and delight we take in the person and character of an intelligent being, as beautiful and excellent. In this sense the word will be used in this discourse. And, complacence being understood in this sense, it may be observed, that benevolence and complacence have not always the same object. We may exercise good will to a person whose whole character is very disagreeable and displeasing to us ; so that he may, at the same time, be the object of our benevolence and of our displicence and aversion ; because, though capable of happiness, his present character is disagreeable and hateful.

The love of esteem is nothing distinct from benevolence and complacence, exercised towards a worthy, excellent object, at least in our apprehension. The love of gratitude is that affection which we exercise towards another, considered as a benefactor, for his good will exercised towards ourselves, or others. This includes in it both benevolence and complacence, and is nothing distinct from this, as might be easily shewn, was there need of it ;

and

and will perhaps be more particularly attended to in the sequel.

Having observed these things concerning love in general, it now remains to be said, what that love is in which holiness consisteth. This is love to God and our neighbour, including ourselves; and is universal benevolence, or friendly affection to all intelligent beings. This universal benevolence, with all that affection or love which is included in it, and inseparable from it, is the holy love which God's law requires, and is the whole of true holiness. This love is distinguished from all other kinds of love, both in its nature, and object. The object is,

1. Universal being, including God and all intelligent creatures. Benevolence, or universal goodness, has for its object all beings which exist, capable of good, or that can be, in any sense and degree, objects of good will. Any kind of good will, or any thing which has the appearance of benevolence, which is limited to particular objects, and will not extend to all towards which good will can be exercised, is not *universal* benevolence; but is essentially different from it, and quite of another nature. That good will, which will extend only to a limited number, or a certain kind or circle of beings, by the supposition, is not universal good will: It falls, as it were, infinitely short of it, in this respect, and is so far from uniting its subject to universal existence, that it is circumscribed by very narrow bounds, and is consistent with ill will and opposition to general existence; yea, it is in fact in its own nature such: For it sets up an infinitely small part of existence, compared with the whole, and regards it above the whole; which has the nature of unfriendly disregard, and real opposition to the whole. It hence appears to be so far from true universal benevolence, that it is of an opposite nature; as it does *from its nature* oppose it. Besides, it is certain that such limited good will has nothing of the nature of universal goodness, but it is something *in its own nature* which thus li-

mits it to a small part of being, in opposition to being in general, as there can be no other reason of this limitation, but the nature of the affection itself: Which could not be, if it was not *in nature* different from universal benevolence, and contrary to it. (a)

But holy love unites the heart to universal existence, so far as it comes into view, and is the most cordial friendship to all without exception; and wishes and seeks the good of every individual, so far as this is consistent with the greatest good of being in general; except those who are known implacable enemies to general existence. And these are necessarily opposed by this universal benevolence.

2. Another object of universal benevolence is *the highest good of the whole*. As soon and as far as the eyes of the benevolent person are opened to see what is the true good of intelligent beings, and highest happiness of the universe, this good becomes the object of his wishes. And as holiness itself is this true and highest good, even holy love and benevolence, by which intelligences are united together in the most beautiful, happy manner, every one to his utmost conspiring to promote the greatest general good, and enjoying this good: I say, as this is the highest good, it becomes the object of his delight, and of his wishes; so that this is the object of his benevolence, and of his complacency at the same time. And in this also holy love is distinguished from every other kind of love, as that has not holiness for its object in any sense or degree, but is consistent with the utmost aversion to it. And this
holy

(a) Mr. Edwards has set this in a clear light, in his dissertation concerning the nature of true virtue, p. 129, 130, 131.

And this view of the matter shews us in what sense universal existence is the *primary* object of holy benevolence. This is the first and most essential thing in it, in which lies its distinction from all love which is not holy. This is the leading, governing thing in it, as that in which its peculiar distinguishing nature consists. He who exercises true benevolence towards any particular being, does it as a friend to the whole; so that his love to him is really love to being in general, as he belongs to the whole, and is included in it.

holy love differs from all other kinds of love in its *nature*, as well as object. The nature of it may be determined by its object. That affection whose object not only differs in nature and kind from the object of other love, but is opposite to it, must itself be of a different and opposite nature. But the particular nature of this love will be more fully explained hereafter.

This universal benevolence, or love to being in general, must have God, who is infinitely the greatest and most excellent, and the sum of all being and perfection, for its object, and is exercised towards him, in loving him with all the heart, with all the soul, with all the mind, and with all the strength. This is, I think, well expressed by Mr. EDWARDS, in the following words : ‘ The mind being
 ‘ under the sovran dominion of *love to God*, does, above
 ‘ all things, seek the glory of God, and make this his
 ‘ supreme, governing, and ultimate end ; consisting in
 ‘ the expression of God’s perfections in their proper effects, and in the communications of the infinite fulness
 ‘ of God to the creature ; in the creature’s highest esteem
 ‘ of God, love to God, and joy in God, and in the proper exercises and expressions of these.—And as far as
 ‘ such a mind exercises benevolence to created beings, it
 ‘ chiefly seeks the good of the creature, consisting in its
 ‘ knowledge or view of God’s glory and beauty, its union
 ‘ with God, conformity and love to him, and joy in him.
 ‘ And that temper or disposition of heart, that consent,
 ‘ union, or propensity of mind to being in general, which
 ‘ appears chiefly in such exercises, is real holiness.
 ‘ And no other affection but this is of the nature of true
 ‘ virtue.’ (a)

But it will be proper here more particularly to shew, that all holy affection consists in this benevolence or goodness ; and that it can consist in nothing but this, and what is implied in it. This will be evident, if the two following propositions can be supported.

I. Universal

(a) Nature of true virtue, p. 133.

1. Universal benevolence does imply love of complacence, and all holy love. He who exercises universal benevolence does esteem and take complacency in all, according to their worth and excellence: For not to do so is unkind and injurious, and therefore contrary to the nature of benevolence. And benevolent affection, from the necessity of its nature, is pleased with this same affection in others. Every one must be pleased with friendship to those to whom he himself is a friend; for not to be so, would be a contradiction.

Benevolent, kind affection necessarily implies also gratitude to benefactors for kindness exercised; for this is nothing else but being properly affected with the benevolence of others, which has just been shewn to be the nature of benevolence. Besides, not to exercise gratitude towards the benevolent and kind, is itself unkind; and therefore contrary to the nature of benevolence. A man must be stripped of all true benevolence, in order to exclude gratitude: Where the former is, the latter is found to an equal degree.—Thus evident is it, that all holy love is implied in universal benevolence; so that he who has this, certainly has the whole. To suppose a person truly benevolent, & not to exercise holy love of esteem, complacence & gratitude, in all suitable ways, & towards all proper objects, is a most glaring contradiction, and to imagine a character which never did, nor can exist,

2. On the contrary, where there is no holy love of benevolence, there can be no holy love of any kind. Since benevolence necessarily includes all holy love, in its very nature; where this is not, there is not, there cannot be, any holy love.

The love of gratitude supposes benevolence, and is really an exercise of this. Gratitude is certainly an approbation of benevolence, which never takes place in a mind destitute of it. And what is gratitude but an exercise of friendly affection towards the benevolent? So certain is it that where there is no good will, there is no true gratitude.

itude. This is so evident at first thought, that 'tis needless to enlarge.

But I shall be more particular in producing evidence that there can be no holy love of complacence, where there is no benevolence. Holy complacence is the love of holiness for holiness sake ; or the approbation of a holy character, for its intrinsic beauty and excellence. That there can be no holy complacence, independent of benevolence, is evident from the following considerations.

The mind cannot have any holy complacence in universal goodness, while itself is wholly destitute of it. The mind which is wholly devoid of kind affection, has no true, sensible idea of benevolence, and consequently can have no delight in it. Delight or complacence is a *sensation* of the mind, which cannot be exercised towards that object of which it has no true sense ; but the mind which has no benevolence, has no sensation of it ; for such a sensation implies benevolence ; and therefore can have no complacence in it. As the love of holiness, is an exercise of holiness ; so the love of holy benevolence, implies the exercise of benevolence. Therefore he who hath no benevolence, hath no complacence in it.—But that affection of the mind which is not the love of *all* holiness, in whatever it may consist, is not a true holy complacence ; but something of a different nature. Therefore there can be no holy complacence in holiness, without the exercise of benevolence : Consequently where there is no benevolence, there is no holy exercise of mind.

But this will be more evident, if possible, by considering the love of complacence, as exercised towards God. It will appear, on due consideration, that the person who has no universal benevolence, does not heartily approve of the benevolence of God ; and therefore does not delight in God's holiness or moral character, so far as it consists in benevolence.—But he who is not a friend to the holy benevolence of God, is certainly not a friend to holiness in general, and so has no complacency in any true holiness

ness. Yea, he who has no benevolence in his heart, is an enemy to benevolence : For the heart of man is in no such instance indifferent, neither friendly, nor opposed to any thing in God's moral character ; is never in such a state, as neither to approve nor disapprove. Therefore such an one is an enemy to universal benevolence in God : Whence it follows that he has no true love to God's moral character. For he who is displeased with any thing in the moral character of God, is certainly displeased with the whole, as the holiness of God is not inconsistent with itself ; but is one most simple thing.

The holiness of God, which is expressed in his law, and in the gospel (for the same character and the same holiness is expressed in both) consists, in a great measure at least, in such supreme regard to himself, and the highest happiness and glory of his kingdom, that he holds every one who opposes him and his kingdom, or has the least disrespect, or even indifference towards him and his glory, justly exposed to eternal damnation ; and is disposed to inflict it on all such who cannot be delivered from it, consistent with his own highest honor, and the greatest good of the whole.

Now, it is in the nature of things impossible, that he who has no regard to God and his glory, and no universal good-will, should in the least approve of such a character. Yea, he must be at enmity with it, as there is no medium. He who is not for it, is against it. (a)

This will appear still more glaring, by observing, what will be more particularly considered hereafter, that the holy love of God, which is most celebrated in the divine oracles, as worthy of our love and imitation, is the love of benevolence, which God exercises and manifests towards fallen man, who has become his enemy. This is certainly a love, not of complacence, but of benevolence, as all love to enemies must be. Now he who has not that benevolence

(a) The mind thus estranged from universal good will, is ' The carnal mind, which is enmity against God.' Rom. viii. 7.

nevolence which disposes him to love his enemies, will not be pleased with this love of God; but displeased. He who has no love to his enemies, but cherishes the contrary affection, will not be pleased with that good-will which is equally extended to his enemies, and to himself; but such love must be the object of his aversion.

Thus evident is it, that they who have no benevolence, do not approve of God's holiness or moral character, revealed in his word; since universal benevolence must be the object, not of their delight, but of their aversion: And consequently, that the holy love of complacence cannot exist independent of benevolence; which was the point to be proved. (a)

D

But

(a) Mr. Hart says, men are drawn to God 'by his giving them to feel in themselves his attracting love and virtue, and paternal benevolence and propensity of heart towards them; by a realizing belief of which, their hearts are put in motion towards him, that all true virtue, and virtuous love begins thus.' That this being 'perceived, realized, and felt, as extended to them, is the true cause, ground and source of the first existence of such a thing in them as a truly virtuous propensity of heart to him,' (remarks on president Edwards, p. 23, 24.)

Upon this it may be observed, that the love of God, which Mr. Hart here speaks of, is the love of benevolence, God's 'paternal benevolence.' It is the love of benevolence, not only as it is love to enemies; but as it is love and grace, in and through Jesus Christ; in which God is represented in the most clear and striking light, as having such a regard to himself and the general good (which is nothing but universal benevolence) that he will not shew any favour to sinners, unless his glory and the general good be effectually secured by Christ the mediator. And he who sees not God's grace and love to men in this light, knows not what is the grace of God in Jesus Christ. Therefore the sense of this love of God, in which their hearts are drawn to him, is itself of the nature of benevolence, and the exercise of it: For, as has been shewn, it is impossible that he who has no holy benevolence, should heartily approve of such benevolence, and take pleasure in it. Therefore, according to Mr. H. the first exercise of holiness in men cannot be an exercise of love, in which there is no benevolence; but this must be the very essence of the first holy act, in which the soul is attracted to God, as the fountain and sum of benevolence, or universal goodness.

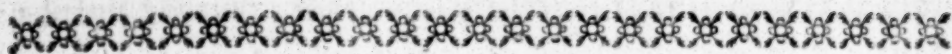
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But if any reader should not see the conclusiveness of these arguments, he is desired to reflect on his own sense of this matter, whether he does not always so include benevolence in his idea of a good character ; that to exclude it, will utterly spoil the whole ; I doubt not this is the common sense of all men ; and nothing is looked upon a more certain evidence, that a man has no holiness, than that conduct which discovers he has no kind affection, but is unmerciful and cruel.

S E C T.

If Mr. H. will shew how a sinner, while wholly destitute of benevolence, and wholly inclined to contrary exercises, can feel the attracting influence of God's benevolence ; and take complacency in his universal goodness ; and, under this attracting influence, return to God, and become his true friend, without any good-will to God, or any other being : We will then grant that universal benevolence is not necessarily implied in the *first*, nor in any subsequent motion of the sinner's heart towards God, and his neighbour.

If it should be said, that when sinners have a realizing belief of God's ' paternal benevolence and propensity of heart towards them,' they do not consider it as universal benevolence ; but only as love *to themselves* in particular, and that this attracts their hearts to God, while yet they have no approbation of general benevolence, or the least apprehension of it :—Upon this I would observe, that this may be Mr. H.'s meaning, and he may express himself thus, through inattention to the true notion of general benevolence, as many doubtless have done. But if the matter is viewed in this light, there is nothing of the nature of holiness in the attraction of their hearts to God, merely because they think he loves them. As they may exercise this love without any benevolence, so they may, and must do it, without the least degree of holiness. It has been shewn that this is not a true sight and belief of the love of God ; and it will appear, I hope, in the sequel, that this has nothing of the nature of holiness ; but is consistent with the reigning power of every lust. I shall *here* only take notice of the most express decision of our saviour himself. ' If ye love them which love you, what thank have ye ? For sinners love those that love them.' (Luk. vi. 32.) Men may be easily converted upon this plan, without having new hearts given them, or any change of heart for the better. They want this light only, i. e. a belief that God loves them (which is not light indeed, but delusion) and they will love him, in this view, and on this ground only, without any disposition to love their enemies, and consistent with their continuing to hate the holiness of God.



S E C T I O N IV.

Wherein self-love is shewn to be no part of that love in which holiness consists ; but of a nature quite different and opposite.

SELF-LOVE has been represented by many, not only as a branch of holiness ; but that in which it radically consists, making it the spring of all our actions. Some have thought it not only no part of holiness, but opposed to it. Others have taken a medium between these two, & represented self-love to be in its nature innocent and good ; but not holy love, unless love to God and our neighbour be joined with it, to regulate and govern it.—In order to determine which of these opinions is right, we must understand what is intended by self-love. By this very different things are meant by different, and often by the same persons. There are three things especially, often called by that name, and their not being distinguished, has occasioned great confusion and error in treating this subject.

First. A general appetite to good, and aversion to evil, considered meerly as such, or a perception of pain or pleasure, is called self-love. This is essential to all moral agents, being implied in every act of will. If nothing was good or evil to us, we could have no choice or power of will, more than a tree or rock ; for by the supposition we should be perfectly indifferent to every thing. We could neither love nor hate, choose nor refuse. This general appetite is therefore common to all moral agents, holy and sinful, and is essential to every act, both of sin and holiness. It is properly a natural capacity ; as much so as the faculty of understanding, or power of will ; and is the very same thing, indeed, with the latter, or at least implied

implied in it. It is therefore, in itself, neither sinful nor holy ; but a foundation or capacity for either. Should this cease in angels and devils, they would no longer be holy or sinful.

Secondly. By self-love is sometimes meant *selfishness*, or those exercises in which a person loves himself only, which wholly confine him to his own personal interest ; he taking no pleasure in any thing else, but placing all his good and happiness here. This is most properly called self-love ; as it is a man's love of his own self, *as self*, and of nothing else ; and therefore is opposed to the love of others, or universal benevolence. This is wholly an interested, selfish affection, by which a person sets up himself as supreme, and the only object of regard ; and nothing is good or lovely in his view, unless it coincide with his selfishness, and be suited to promote his own private interest : All other beings are by him subordinated to himself, and loved for his own sake only ; and so far as they oppose, or do not serve this contracted, partial interest, in which he places all his good and happiness, are either hated, or totally disregarded.—In a word, the disposition and language of his heart is, ‘ There is nothing in the whole universe of any worth to me, but my own self ; if I may be happy, it is enough.’ There is no need of any laboured proof to shew that such exercises of heart are, in their nature, opposition to universal good-will : This appears at first view. Therefore, if the latter has any thing of the nature of holiness, the former must stand directly opposed to it.

Thirdly. By self-love may be understood the love a person has for himself as part of the whole, which is implied in universal benevolence. He who loves the whole, loves every part of the whole ; therefore must love himself, and seek his own happiness, as he is included in general being. 'Tis a contradiction to suppose that a person has universal good-will, and yet has no regard to himself.

This

This love of ourselves is therefore necessarily implied in that universal benevolence which is opposed to the selfishness described above. That is altogether selfish, consisting in a man's loving himself, *as self*, or merely because he is himself, but this love of himself of which I am now speaking, is not love of self, *as self*, but as implied in the general object of love; and therefore is no other than love, love to being in general, or universal benevolence. It is the same kind of affection with which he loves his neighbour; in loving his neighbour, he loves himself also, because he cannot love his neighbour as part of the whole, and not love himself also as such; his own happiness, as an individual, being worth as much in itself, and to the whole, as that of his neighbour, and as much included in the general good, since it equally conduces to the happiness of the whole.

And it may be further observed, that this love, in which a man regards himself as part of the whole, and his interest and happiness, for the same reason he regards that of his neighbour, may be exercised with greater strength, and more sensibly, with respect to his own interest and welfare, than towards that of his neighbour, who is as worthy of regard as himself; & yet there be nothing selfish in his affection, but it may be wholly of the nature of general benevolence.—And that for two reasons—

1. He has a more clear, full and constant view of himself and his interest, than he can have of his neighbour's; therefore he must be more affected with the former, and it will be more the object of his concern, than the latter. As man is not omniscient, and his mind cannot comprehend universal being; but is limited in his views and exercises, he must be most affected with those objects which are most in his view. This is right, and his duty: And not to be thus affected is inconsistent with general benevolence.

2. Every

2. Every person has a more particular and immediate care of himself committed to him by God, than of his neighbour. As he is under greater advantages to know his own state and circumstances, wants and enjoyments, and promote his own interest, in general, than another can be; so this concern is more especially committed to him; which is a further reason why he should pay a greater regard to it, than to that of his neighbour, though in itself as great and important as his own. This is not selfishness; but the genuine exercise of disinterested benevolence.

Thus a man who has a benevolent regard for a whole community or kingdom, and is equally a friend to every part and each person of that community, and equally exerts himself for the welfare of each, so far they come under his notice; when he is fixed in a particular town, and thereby obtains a clearer knowledge of their circumstances, both good and evil, and of the best means to promote their greatest happiness, he will necessarily turn his attention to them more constantly and in a greater degree, and be more sensibly affected with their miseries and enjoyments, than with those of the neighbouring towns. And of the inhabitants of this town, they whose circumstances and interest are most in his view; and who by their particular situation and connexion, are most under his care, will have the first and greatest share of his attention and benevolent regards. This is no evidence, that he is selfish; it is the natural, genuine exercise of general benevolence.

This view may serve to shew us one reason why, in many cases, 'tis so difficult to distinguish that self-love which consists in selfishness, from the benevolence which is its contrary; and why these are often confounded, and taken for the same thing. That self-love which consists in selfishness, has self for its first and supreme object, and is extended

extended to others, only as they are viewed as more or less favourable to the interest of self, as such.

Thus selfishness may extend to a whole community, and each individual member of it; because the selfish man considers their welfare as connected with his own. And as his welfare is commonly in a higher degree, and more sensibly connected with the welfare of those who are nearest to him, especially those who love him; he will have a greater regard still for them and their welfare, purely from selfishness, or for his own sake. And since his near relations, his own family and children, are in a sense a part of himself; and his interest and happiness is in a peculiar manner dependent on their's, his selfish regards will be more particularly extended to them. In this respect there is in selfishness a resemblance to what is found in benevolence; which, though it consists in disinterested good-will to the whole, is, as observed above, nevertheless exercised by the benevolent person to individuals; and more strongly to those who are more nearly connected with him, and more particularly to himself.

There is, however, a great difference, and opposition in these two kinds of affection; which appears from what has been already said. This selfish affection, though extended to the whole community with which the selfish man is connected, is at bottom nothing but love to himself. This is the foundation and center of his love. He in reality loves nothing but himself, and regards others wholly for his own sake. Therefore, when he considers their welfare as inconsistent with his own; or any way opposing or impeding his interest, his heart will turn against them, and hate them, whatever be their connexion or relation. On the other hand, the regard to a man's own interest, which is included in general good-will, is not love of himself, as such: There is nothing contracted and selfish in this affection, which is founded on his good-will to the whole.

This

This brings into view another thing, in which these two sorts of love of self differ, and oppose each other. He whose regard to himself and his own interest does not arise from selfishness, but general benevolence, is ready to give up his own personal good, for the sake of the whole : He desires no good for himself, unless consistent with the common good. Whatever supposed good of his own, or of another, interferes with the greatest general good, is no good to him, but the object of his aversion, in this view of it : So that all his own particular interest is subordinate to that of the whole. This is necessary, when regard to ourselves is but a branch of general good-will. Thus the interest of the benevolent man is the common interest, and he has no other. In a word, he subjects and devotes himself, and all things, to the glory of God, and the happiness and glory of his church and kingdom ; which is the greatest universal good, and includes the highest good of the creature ; he having no other interest but this.

But that self-love which consists in selfishness, is, in this respect, most opposite to this. So far as the heart is governed by this, it does not, it cannot give up its own private good, for the sake of the greatest public good ; since, by the supposition, he knows no good but the former, and every thing is by him subordinated to that.—But enough has been said to shew the difference and opposition there is between selfishness, and that regard and concern a benevolent person has for his own interest, as a part of the whole, which is necessarily implied in general benevolence.

It has been said, though *inordinate* self-love is sinful, it is not so in itself ; but when joined with love to God and our neighbour, and subordinate to the general good, it is a virtuous, holy affection : And to confirm this, the divine command has been alledged, ‘Thou shalt love thy
neighbour,

'neighbour, as thyself.' Here, it is said, we are commanded to love ourselves, as much as our neighbour. Self love is therefore not a sin, but a duty, so long as it does not exceed due bounds.

Upon this the following things may be observed :

1. It is utterly unaccountable, and carries in it a direct contradiction, that the same affection, when exercised in a certain limited degree, should be holiness ; but when exercised in a higher and stronger degree, should not only have less holiness, but change its nature, and become sin. This none will assert, after due attention : Yet this is asserted in the proposition under consideration. However self-love may be restrained, it is still self-love, and of the same nature with that which is under no restraint ; and therefore as opposite to holiness, though not to so great a degree, and the bad effects of it may not be so great, or so manifest. A devouring beast of prey, when confined in a cage, may not be so mischievous, or appear so dreadful, as when let loose, and destroying all before him : But his nature is not changed by his confinement ; he is still, in his nature, not a harmless creature, but a beast of prey.

2. This self-love cannot be subordinate to the good of the whole ; it is contrary to the very nature of it, and implies a contradiction. It seeks to advance self only, and subordinates every thing to this ; and therefore will not consent that self should be subordinated to any thing else, or have any rival. Whenever it consents to this, it is no longer self-love, but generous, disinterested affection ; as contrary to selfishness, as mercy is to injustice and cruelty. Such a consent and change is, however, impossible, being a contradiction. This affection must be rooted out, or counteracted ; and a directly opposite affection must take place, in order to a person's subordinating his own personal interest to any other interest whatsoever.

Therefore, if they who speak of self-love, so regulated as to be subordinate to a proper regard to others, and to

the general good, mean any thing which is consistent, and agreeable to the truth, they must intend that regard to ourselves, which is not self-love, but real benevolence to the whole, and respects ourselves as part of the whole only. This regard to ourselves, as has been shewn, is always, of necessity, subordinate to the good of the whole.

3. Self-love is so far from being enjoined or approved in the command, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self,' that it is utterly forbidden. Self-love is wholly a partial affection, giving all to ourselves, and nothing to our neighbour, and is therefore opposed to love to him; especially to loving him as ourselves.

Nothing but universal benevolence can be obedience to this command; and so far as this takes place it is obeyed, and self-love is opposed and mortified. This benevolence, as has been shewn, implies a proper regard to ourselves, and an equal regard to our neighbour; having all that impartiality, and love to our neighbour and ourselves, which this law requires.—And, by the way, this is a clear evidence that universal benevolence, with the affection implied in it, is that in which all holiness consists, since no other kind of love is obedience to this command; but he who has this, does of necessity love his neighbour as himself.

ON the whole, it appears that three different kinds of affection have been called self-love. The first is neither sin nor holiness, but is equally implied in both. The two last are directly opposed to each other; the latter being general, disinterested benevolence, extended to ourselves as included in the whole; and is the same holy love which has God and our neighbour for its object. The other is contracted selfishness, by which self only is regarded, and exalted above God and our neighbour, and in opposition to the general good; and is, in every degree of it, sinful.—This selfishness is properly called self-love; and in this sense the word will be used in the following inquiry.

That

That universal benevolence is the whole of holiness ; and, on the other hand, all sin consists in self-love, will more fully appear by the following consideration of each, in its exercises and fruits.

Universal good will comprehends all the love to God, our neighbour, and ourselves, required in the law of God ; and therefore must be the whole of holy obedience. — Every pious sentiment and affection is comprised in this ; and all piety in words and practice is but an expression of this love : Where this love is not, all outward expressions of piety, in words and actions, are emptiness and hypocrisy. Let any serious person think what are the particular branches of true piety : Let him view each one by itself ; and when he has discovered the nature and essence of it, he will find that disinterested, friendly affection is its distinguishing characteristic. For instance, let fear and reverence of the divine majesty be considered in this view. What but love and friendly affection distinguishes this from the fear and dread of devils ? All the holiness in pious fear, by which it is distinguished from the fear of the wicked, consists in love. Leave all disinterested, friendly affection to the divine being out of fear, and all holiness is excluded. —

Again, if we consider what is contained in true gratitude to God, we shall find disinterested, kind affection, the only thing wherein it differs from the affection of the most wicked creature. Where there is no good will, there is nothing in what is called gratitude, better than that which the legion of devils exercised, when they were so far gratified by Christ, as to be suffered to destroy the herd of swine. But so far as good-will is exercised, the goodness of God to us and others, will excite holy gratitude ; which is nothing else but good-will to God and our neighbour, in which we ourselves are included, and correspondent affection, excited and acted out in the view of the good will and kindness of God.

And universal good will implies the whole of that affection

fection and duty we owe to our neighbour. It all consists in the exercise and expression of this, and those affections that are implied in it. The exercise and practice of righteousness or justice towards our neighbour, implies a benevolent regard to him and his interest. Where this is not, there is no exercise and practice of justice in the heart, whatever is the external conduct; for justice consists in doing to our neighbour, as we would he should do to us; or, in other words, loving our neighbour as ourselves. And where this benevolent regard to our neighbour is, there is justice; for this love worketh no ill to our neighbour.—And as righteousness, truth and faithfulness are implied in universal benevolence, so are temperance and chastity, or sobriety in the proper restraint and government of our own appetites and passions: For 'tis easy to see that the undue indulgence of these is contrary to benevolence, as tending to hurt others, or ourselves, or both; and so is opposite to the general good, and the divine command, in which all the crime of such indulgence consists. In short, there is not any one virtue, or branch of godliness, humanity or sobriety; nor any duty we owe to God, our neighbour, or ourselves, that is not comprehended in universal benevolence; and is not necessarily exercised and practised, so far as this affection takes place in the heart: And where there is no defect in the latter, the former are found in their fullness and perfection: For the whole is nothing but benevolence acted out in its proper nature, and perfection; or love to God and our neighbour made perfect in all its genuine exercises and expressions.

On the contrary, all sin consists in self-love, and what is implied in this.

Self-love is, in its whole nature, and in every degree of it, enmity against God. It is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be; and is the only affection that can oppose it. It cannot be reconciled to any of God's conduct, rightly understood; but is in its very nature rebellion

rebellion against it ; which is all an expression of that love which is most contrary to self-love. This is therefore the fruitful source of every exercise and act of impiety and rebellion against God, and contempt of him, that ever was, or can be.—Self-love exercised and indulged, blinds the heart to every true moral excellence and beauty. This does not suit the taste of the selfish heart, but gives it disgust. Self-love is the foundation and reason of all that blindness to spiritual things, to God, his glorious character, works and kingdom, which the scripture represents wicked men to have ; and is therefore the source of all the errors which men imbibe, as well as all the open idolatry in the heathen world, and false religion under the light of the gospel. All this is agreeable to that self-love which opposes God's true character ; and under the influence of this, men go off from the truth, and believe, love and practice a lie ; it being itself the greatest practical lie in nature, as it sets up that which is comparatively nothing, above universal existence. Self-love is the source of all the profaneness and impiety in the world ; and of all pride and ambition among men ; which is nothing but selfishness acted out in this particular way. This is at the bottom of all the worldliness and sensuality that men run into ; as it blinds their eyes to all true good, contracts their hearts, and sinks them down, so that they look upon worldly enjoyments to be the greatest good, and that in which their true interest lies. This is the spring of all the hatred and ill-will, strife and contention among men ; for this leads men to hate and oppose all those whom they view in the way of their own selfish interest. This is the source of all falsehood, injustice and oppression under the sun ; in which men are, through their selfishness, seeking, by undue methods, to invade the right and property of others. Self-love produces all the violent passions, envy, wrath, clamour and evil speaking, of which men are guilty. Take away selfishness, and all these would cease immediately.

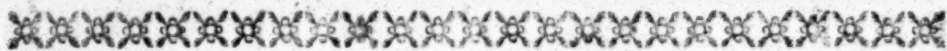
diately. And if there be any other sin, any thing which is contrary to the divine law, it is briefly comprehended in this fruitful source of all iniquity, SELF-LOVE.

And hence we may see that holy love is wholly a *disinterested* affection, and in what sense it is so. Self-love is wholly an interested affection, as self is the only object of it. Holy love has no regard to self, as self; but is a regard to the greatest general good and interest; the glory of God in the highest glory of his kingdom, and the greatest good of the creation. So far as a man exercises holy love, he has no other interest but this; as all is devoted to this, and given up for the sake of it. And in this sense all his love is disinterested, as it seeks not any self interest, but the contrary. He who exercises this disinterested love, has pleasure indeed, and is pursuing an interest and happiness; though 'tis not a selfish interest, but that in the pursuit of which he renounces what self-love seeks.

A judge is said to be interested in a cause he is to decide, so far as his own personal interest is concerned in it, and his self-love will influence him to take one side, rather than the other; which renders him unfit to judge the cause. But if his own personal interest is not concerned in the case, and there be nothing to bias him to one side rather than the other, he is said to be disinterested. And though he may be bribed, or some way interested in the matter; yet if he is not at all influenced by this, and decides the cause contrary to the dictates of self-love, he is said to act disinterestedly. In such a sense as this, all holy affection is disinterested. Such a judge, when he renounces all selfish considerations, and espouses the cause of the widow and fatherless, and delivers them from the hand of oppressors, has an interest which he seeks; but not an interest, which selfishness prompts him to pursue: And the more he interests himself in the cause of the poor, helpless widow, and the greater pleasure he takes in helping her, the more disinterested are his exertions

ertions and conduct, and the more is self-love counter-acted and mortified.

So, he who, in the exercise of holy love, pursues the glory of God, and the highest interest and happiness of his kingdom, which includes the greatest good of his fellow creatures; pursues the best, the most important interest, and has the most noble, refined pleasure in the exercise of this affection; yet in all this he is wholly disinterested, as he opposes selfishness, and all regard to self, which is not implied in being thus devoted to the greatest general good; and forsakes the whole interest which self-love seeks, for the kingdom of God's sake.



S E C T I O N V.

In which the foregoing account of sin and holiness is shewn to be agreeable to reason.

IT is most reasonable that the common and greatest good of the whole should be sought by every particular member of it: That every one should be so devoted to the good of the whole, as to give up the less good of individuals, and consequently his own personal interest, whenever inconsistent herewith. Thus, it is highly reasonable that a particular member of a community should cheerfully give up all his personal interest, his whole estate, and even his life, when this is evidently necessary to save the whole nation from ruin. If a city is on fire, and in order to stop its progress, and save the city, 'tis necessary that the house of a particular person should be totally demolished; he should with pleasure give up his house to be destroyed, however magnificent and costly, and though it contains all he has in the world. If in this case a man should hesitate a moment, and be inclined to save his own house, to the utter destruction of the whole city; every one would condemn him as acting a most unreasonable, fordid part. But if
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he is such a friend to the city, and interests himself so much in its welfare, as to take more pleasure in saving it, even at the expence of all he has in the world, than a selfish man can have in whatever he possesses, he will be applauded as one of an excellent spirit. And every one must grant he ought to be imitated by all. And it is reasonable that every one of the society should be regarded by the rest, according to his importance and worth; his disposition and ability to promote the greatest good of the whole community.

But this is universal, disinterested benevolence. Nothing but this will form men to such exercises and conduct. But where this benevolence reigns in every heart, each one will be thus a friend to all. He who has this benevolence, will, by it, be united to the grand community of the universe, including all existence, and be devoted to the good of the whole: And as this is comprised in the glory of God, and the perfection and happiness of his kingdom, this will be the object of his affection, and he will subordinate all to this; and in so doing will act a most reasonable part.

On the other hand, nothing can be more unreasonable than that every individual should be altogether selfish, and seek his own personal interest only; not caring what becomes of the community, or any belonging to it, further than his selfishness prompts him to it; being ready at any time to sacrifice the public, and the greatest good of every individual to his own private advantage, however important and worthy he is, and whatever obligation he is under to him.

This carries in it every thing mean, mischievous and perverse. But *this* is self-love. This is the nature and tendency of every degree of it, though it may be many ways under restraints, and often put on the appearance of benevolence and friendship.

II. This universal benevolence alone, can produce the strong, happy union of intelligences, which reason teaches

teaches must be the attendant of holiness. It fixes each in his proper place, and effects the highest and most beautiful harmony conceivable.

III. Reason teaches that universal benevolence is the highest good of intelligences. This makes every one a wise, hearty friend to all the rest, and devotes him to the public good : By which the highest common good has the greatest possible security, and is advanced to the utmost. Should a king and his subjects be thus united in the most perfect friendship to each other, and entirely devoted to the highest general good ; each one knowing wherein it consists : And the community having wisdom to contrive, and power to execute the best means to effect it ; there would be no evil in this kingdom, but what is necessary to promote the general good ; which would be advanced to the highest degree ; and it must be, in this respect, the most happy community imaginable.

And this raises the happiness of each individual to the highest pitch his capacity will admit. For his universal benevolence will necessarily put him in possession of the good of the whole, and of every particular, so far as he perceives it, and in proportion to the degree of his benevolence. By his disinterested good will, this is become his good ; or he enjoys it as much as if it were his own personal good ; whereby he has immensely more happiness than in any other possible way : And, in proportion to his good will to the whole, he takes pleasure in others who are friends to the same ; and must be filled with a peculiar satisfaction and delight, while he sees all around him, not only delighting in himself, as a friend to the whole, but devoted to the general good.

This may be applied to the grand community, THE KINGDOM OF GOD ; which comprehends GOD, the supreme king, and all who are voluntarily united in subjection to him. The reason of man cannot invent any way to secure and promote the happiness of this community, unless universal benevolence be introduced. And no o-

ther kind of virtue is necessary to the highest conceivable good of the whole, and every individual. *

But self-love, when it has its genuine, unrestrained influence, destroys all public good. This is the mother of all the lusts which bring evil into the universe. It prevents individuals enjoying the good of others; and indeed blinds them to all true happiness. It contracts the mind, and degrades it below the proper pursuits of a rational creature, and entails misery on its unhappy subject.

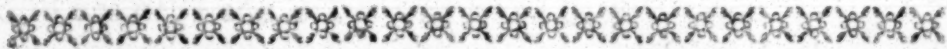
IV. The natural world, we know, was created for the moral; and 'tis generally granted, that the former is an emblem of the latter. We may hence expect to find *that* in the former, which bears a conspicuous analogy to holiness, the perfection and glory of the intellectual system: And this must be the general law of attraction, the common bond of union in our material system; by which all bodies are mutually attracted, and tend to one center: Every part, while it attracts, being also attracted by the whole, is fixed in its station, and extends its influence to all; so that each particle has, in a sense, a regard to the whole, and contributes to the general good. This is the source of the order and beauty so obvious in our world. The sun, the center of all, spreads his kind influence over the whole; and each inferior body, at the same time it pays a due regard to all other bodies, pays him a supreme regard. This is one most simple affection, universal attraction: A most clear, striking resemblance of universal benevolence in the moral world, in which all its union and glory consist.

Further, the repulsive quality found in some bodies, by which they resist others, and which, should it universally obtain, without control, would issue in the destruction of the material world, is an apt representation of self-love.

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* This might be more particularly illustrated; but is left to the pleasing contemplation of the benevolent friends of Christ and his kingdom.

Thus reason, nature, and, I may add, general experience, join to point out universal benevolence as the sum of all holiness.—Hence almost all writers on morality have made virtue to consist chiefly, if not altogether, in what they call universal benevolence ; though many of them have left GOD and his kingdom, the great object of true benevolence, out of their system : Nor have they distinguished properly between benevolence and self-love.



SECTION VI.

In which is shewn that holiness, as taught in divine revelation, consists in universal benevolence, agreeable to the foregoing account.

THE holy scripture is the best and only sure guide in determining the question before us ; which has therefore been kept in view in what has been already said : But we shall now consult it more particularly.

I. The revealed law of God teaches what true holiness is. This is the only standard of all moral excellence and perfection. It is not only the standard of all holiness in the creature ; but is a transcript of God's moral perfection. Nothing more is necessary then, in order to know what holiness is, in God and the creature, but to understand this law.

Our saviour has taught us, as has been before observed, that all the law requires is love : Consequently holiness must consist wholly in love. We have considered what kind of love this must be ; and arguments have been offered to prove it consists in universal, disinterested benevolence : At the same time, what is meant by this, has been explained. Our present inquiry is, Whether this

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is the love required in the divine law? The answer is not difficult to him who will attend.

The law does not require self-love; but love to God and our neighbour; not from selfish motives, which is nothing but self-love extended to them, merely because of our connexion with them, or the benefit we have received, or hope to receive from them, or because they love us. Our saviour tells us this is not holiness, but consistent with being wholly sinful. 'For if ye love them which love you, what reward have you? Do not even the Publicans the same?'†

Let any one consult his own sense, whether he accepts that as true respect and love from any one, which appears to be wholly selfish; being nothing but a regard to the benefit to himself which he hopes to receive from him. He will at once feel that this has nothing of the nature of true love; but is a mean, sordid affection, which he cannot but despise. And this is the sense of all mankind, in their own case; however they may put off their maker with such selfish affection, and think he will accept it at their hands as true love and holiness. Thus the degenerate priests in Israel offered that to God, which would affront their governor, had they offered it to him; nor would they accept it from their neighbour.*

The love to our neighbour, which God's law requires, is certainly universal, disinterested good will, since it is a love which will dispose us to do good unto *all men*, and must extend to our greatest enemies: For no love but this will do so. Therefore when Christ himself gave an instance of this love, he produced one in which there is nothing but the most disinterested goodness; benevolence towards an enemy in distress.† This we are sure he would not have done, if this were not the very love required in the command. And he expressly declares that the command does not mean a love to our neighbour, as distinguished from our enemy, as it was then understood by the Jews; but

† Matt. v. 46.

* Mal. i. 8.

† Luk. x. 25,—37.

but love to enemies, which wishes them well, and will lead us to do them good, however injuriously they treat us. †

And is it not very unreasonable to suppose, that the second command, which our Lord says is like unto the first, requires something of a different kind, though it is called by the same name, *love*? There can be no difference but what arises from the very different objects of this same love.

St. John teaches us that love to God, and to our brother or neighbour, is inseparable; that he who loves one of these, certainly and necessarily loves the other; which could not be, if love to God was different in kind from love to our neighbour. ‘If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar. Whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?’ § It is to be observed, that the love to our brother, here spoken of, is the love of good will, expressed in shewing kindness to him; and indeed the apostle speaks of no other kind of love in this epistle, as every instance of love which he mentions, is love of benevolence. Now, if love to God is not disinterested good will, how can this imply good will to our brother, or lead to it, so as to form an infallible connexion?

It has been said, that he who loves God, is hence led to love his neighbour, in obedience to God’s command, and from his example, who is good to all; and not because love to God, and kind affection to our neighbour, is the same kind of love. To this it may be answered,

1. That love to God, which is not disinterested good will, nor implies it, is no principle of obedience to the divine command, and can have no tendency to it. No love will dispose men to obey God, but the love of ‘good will;’ || or the love by which they are true friends of God.

† Mat. v. 43 44.

§ 1 Joh. iii. 17. iv. 20.

|| Eph. vi. 7.

God. He who does not obey God from this motive, does not obey him at all: He is influenced only by fear, which none will say is true obedience. Therefore they who assert we are led to love our neighbour, purely because God commands it, and from love to him, if they attend to their own ideas, will find they suppose this to be love of good will, which is the very thing they are attempting to oppose; and so contradict themselves in the supposition they make, and really grant all we assert.

2. If love to God, which implies no good will to him, could induce to obedience in any instance, it would not dispose him to obey this command, and exercise good will to his neighbour, and such command will not in the least influence him to it. If his inducement to love his neighbour is wholly from selfish principles, which is always the case, where there is no disinterested good will, it is, by the supposition, not love of his neighbour, but of himself only; and is so far from obedience to the divine command, that it is rebellion against it.

3. God's universal, disinterested good will cannot be a motive to love our neighbour, with the same good will, any further than we are pleased with it; for we are never disposed to imitate what we dislike. But to be pleased with this goodness of God, supposes our hearts to be in the exercise of the same; for benevolence is implied in taking pleasure in benevolence, as has been shewn. This therefore supposes that good will is implied in that love to God, which leads us to the love of good will to our neighbour; so supposes the very thing it is adduced to oppose.

Thus impossible is it to account for that inseparable connexion of love to God, with good will to our neighbour, which the scripture asserts, unless this love, in these two branches of it, is the same in kind. But if love to God is, in its nature, universal, disinterested good will, the scripture representation appears consistent and intelligible.

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Thus it appears that the love required in the law of God is universal, disinterested goodness in all its branches, attendants and fruits : Therefore this is holiness. But it must be further observed,

God in giving such a law, requiring such love, has expressed his universal, disinterested goodness, and shewed that his moral character consists in love. We have good authority therefore, even from the divine law, to say, that GOD IS LOVE. His love is as really expressed in the law, as in the gospel. In the latter, this disinterested love and goodness, which appears in the law, is expressed and acted out in a more full and glorious manner and degree, and set in a more affecting and striking light. In this sense the law is good, it is love and goodness; as really as the gospel. And as the divine holiness is expressed in the law, in requiring love ; so the creature, by exercising this same love, is a partaker of God's holiness, or of the divine nature, as the scripture represents the matter : He is transformed into the image of God ; or, as St. John expresses it, ' God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.' *

OBJ. The law is not all love and goodness. It requires love indeed, but it is guarded with the most awful sanction, and curses him who does not obey it perfectly. This is not an expression of love, but strict and awful justice. What love can there be in cursing a sinner, and punishing him forever ? Love is exercised in *saving* sinners, but not in *damning* them.

ANS. He who is infinitely good, is in the same degree an enemy to all opposition to the highest good. This will be the greatest, the only crime in his view ; and from

* 1 Joh. iv. 16. It is observable, that as the apostle says here, ' He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him,' he also says, chap. iii. ver. 24. ' He that keepeth his commandments, dwelleth in him, and he in him.' Whence it appears, that *dwelling in love, and keeping God's commandments*, is the same thing : Consequently love comprises all the obedience required ; or, as St. Paul says, ' Love is the fulfilling of the law.'

from this love, he will be disposed to maintain his law, which requires love, in the punishment of all such who turn enemies to the greatest good of being, according to their desert. This is the only way in which this love can properly express itself in the divine law. Had God commanded love, and not threatened the contrary with the most dreadful punishment, he would not have expressed his love and goodness, as he has done by this threatening. In this view, divine justice is nothing but the most perfect love and goodness, exercised in a proper way against the enemies of this goodness, and manifested in hating and punishing such. And the sufferings inflicted on the son of God, when he stood in the place of sinners; and the eternal punishment of the wicked in hell, are the necessary effect and proper expression of divine love; even that same love which is expressed in the precepts of God's law, or by any other medium. This is nothing but universal benevolence, which seeks the greatest good of the whole, properly expressed in this way.

Divine love comprehends wisdom, justice, truth and faithfulness, and every moral perfection and excellence whatsoever.* What is called by these different names,

* Wisdom consists in proposing the wisest and best end, and pursuing it by the most proper means. This is comprised in universal benevolence, which fixes on the greatest good of the whole, and seeks it as the supreme, ultimate end. He who has not universal benevolence, does not propose and pursue the wisest and best end; but is wholly blind to it. Thus, universal, disinterested goodness appears to be that in which all true wisdom consists. This therefore must be the holiness which is called wisdom in scripture: And its opposite, selfishness, is the foolishness, which is there opposed to wisdom.

It may be also observed here, that *righteous* and *holy* often mean the same thing in scripture; and *righteousness* frequently intends holiness; and is often used to express the whole of God's moral character; though 'tis many times used in a more limited sense, and intends holiness as exercised with regard to some particular object. But it never signifies any thing which is not holiness, and does not comprise love; and the whole is comprehended in universal, disinterested

is but one most simple thing, even divine LOVE; for God in his whole moral character is *love*. Take away love and goodness, and there will be neither wisdom, truth, faithfulness, nor justice; for they have no existence but in the exercise of love; and love implies all these, and necessarily acts out, so as to form a character, properly denoted by these names, as it appears to creatures in different relations, and respects different objects.

The law of God then leads us to consider holiness as consisting in universal, disinterested good will, considered in all its genuine exercises and fruits, and acted out in all its branches towards God, and our neighbour. This holiness is exercised towards God, in such a regard and kind affection for him, as to be wholly devoted to his honor and interest, and the honor and glory of his kingdom, and seek it, as the highest and ultimate end. This good will exercised towards God, his kingdom and interest, with all those affections it comprises, is to love God with all the heart.—This same holiness or love is exercised towards our neighbour, in wishing and pursuing the greatest good of all, and of ourselves as included in the whole; and in all that disinterested affection which is necessarily implied in this.

And let it be observed here, that this love to our neighbour, as it regards the greatest good of the whole, as its chief object, and respects the good of individuals, as included in this; and as the greatest good of mankind consists in being the voluntary subjects and servants of Christ, in belonging to his kingdom, and promoting the highest interest of that: This love, I say, is not really a distinct thing from seeking the glory and kingdom of

of
ed benevolence. He who has this, is *righteous*; his heart is *right* towards all beings, and disposed to give every one his due. This is righteousness, in the most proper and comprehensive sense of the word; and without this love there is no righteousness. Hence righteousness seems to be put sometimes for goodness and mercy. See Psalm. 36. 10. 89. 16. 103. 17. 143. 11. 12. 145. 7.—So holiness evidently means the divine goodness. See Psalm. 30. 4. 97. 12.

of God ; as these perfectly coincide. In seeking the glory of God, and interest of his kingdom, we necessarily seek the greatest good of mankind ; and so far as we are devoted to their best interest, we act as friends to God, and seek his honor, and the interest of his kingdom. The whole therefore is summed up in *seeking first the kingdom of God*, or making this our supreme and ultimate end ; so as to be willing to do or suffer any thing that shall be necessary or proper to promote this. In this the love of God and our neighbour center in one point, so that they cannot be divided ; and this affection in which all holiness consists, really has but one object, viz. THE KINGDOM OF GOD. Our divine teacher sets the matter in this light, and speaks as no man would have spoke, when he directs men to seek the kingdom of God, as the only object of their pursuit, for the sake of which he commands them to forsake every other interest. *

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* See Matt. vi. 33. Luk. xii. 31. xviii. 29.—In Matthew the words are, “ Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness.” The kingdom of God is the kingdom which Christ is erecting, and bringing to its highest perfection and glory ; and comprehends God’s moral kingdom, in its whole extent ; in which is the full and most complete display of the divine perfections, or glory ; and all the good and happiness of the creation. This is ‘ that great city, the holy Jerusalem,’ which St. John saw, ‘ descending out of heaven from God, *having the glory of God*,’ Rev. xxi. 10. 11. To seek this kingdom *first*, is to make the interest, happiness and glory of it our ultimate end, so as to do all for its sake, and subordinate every thing to this. This kingdom, considered in its full extent, and all its appendages, is the first, the only object of the desires and pursuit of Christ himself : So that in these words he directs his disciples to imitate him, and be holy, as he is holy.

By *his righteousness* is not meant any thing distinct from the kingdom of God. It intends the divine perfections displayed in this kingdom, in the glorious work of redemption, including the salvation of the redeemed, and the complete overthrow of all his enemies. In this sense the word is used in the following passages. ‘ The Lord God will cause *righteousness* and *praise* to spring forth before all nations.—And the Gentiles shall see *thy righteousness*, and all kings *thy glory*.’ Isai. 61. 11. 62. 2. ‘ Harken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord—For the Lord shall com-

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That love to God and our neighbour, which seeks the greatest good of the whole, the greatest display of the divine perfections, and the highest happiness of the creation will fix and center in this as the grand object; for this comprises all the good in the universe; all things being made, and every thing ordered and done by God, for the sake of this, and in order to bring it to the highest perfection and glory, and that it may comprise the greatest possible good. Nothing is of any worth in God's view, any further than it may serve to promote the glory and happiness of this kingdom; and all the holiness of creatures consists in that love, which has this for its great object

fort Zion, &c.—*My salvation shall be forever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.* Harken unto me, ye that know *righteousness*, the people in whose heart is my law, fear ye not the reproach of men.—For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: But *my righteousness shall be forever, and my salvation from generation to generation* chap. 51. 1,—8. Here, to follow after righteousness and seek the Lord, is to seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness. And God's *righteousness*, and his *salvation*, mean the same thing. This being so, when St. Luke mentions this injunction of our Lord, he puts it in the following words, 'But rather seek ye *the kingdom of God*'; this including the whole: For if *his righteousness* was not included in this, it would not be omitted.

The same thing is inculcated by Christ, when he directs and encourages all to subordinate every thing, however dear to them, to this grand interest, and forsake all 'for the kingdom of God's sake,' Luk. 18. 29. It is observable that in a parallel text (Mark 10. 29) instead of *the kingdom of God's sake*, the words are '*for my sake, and the gospel's*,' because these words express the very same thing. The kingdom of God and the gospel are the same: Therefore to preach the gospel, is to preach the kingdom of God. Luk. 4. 43. 9. 2, 60. Act. 20. 25. And 'tis called the gospel of the kingdom of God, Mark 1. 14. And as this is Christ's kingdom and interest, comprising himself, and the whole which he seeks; whatever is done for the sake of the kingdom of God, is done for his sake.

The holiness of the mediator is wholly exercised in seeking this kingdom: His righteousness, by which sinners are justified, consists in what he did and suffered for its sake. And the holiness of men consists wholly in seeking this kingdom, which is love to God and their neighbour, or universal, disinterested benevolence.—

object, and desires and pursues this as the great and only interest, to which every thing else is subordinated.

II. It will serve to confirm what has been observed concerning the law of God, and further shew what true holiness is, according to scripture, if we consider what is that divine love which is there represented as the holiness of God, or that in which his moral character and glory is revealed; in conformity to which the holiness of man consists.

St. John says, 'God is love.' By which 'tis evident he means to express the whole of God's moral character. And we have a good warrant to take his words in this sense from the divine law, which is a transcript of God's moral character, and requires nothing but *love*. The apostle tells us how this love appears, and wherein is the greatest manifestation of it to man, viz. in giving his son to die for the redemption of man, and accomplishing all that good which is comprised in it. 'In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten son into the world, that we might live through him.'* This is wholly love of good will, as expressed in the highest act of kindness, and is the most perfectly disinterested love, as 'tis exercised towards enemies. This is elsewhere spoken of as that in which the love of God appears in its greatness, excellence and glory. 'But God *commendeth* his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' † This highest instance of the most disinterested benevolence is thus spoken of, as that in which the divine character, or God's holy love, is acted out and set forth to our view. It hence appears, that disinterested benevolence is the love in which God's holiness consists. Therefore we are called upon to imitate this love of God, as that by which we may be like him, partakers of his holiness. St. John says, when speaking of this love of God, 'Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. If we love

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* 1 Joh. iv. 8, 9.

† Rom. v. 8.

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one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.' If we love one another with that love which God exercised and manifested in giving his son to die for us, we by this are conformed to God, his image is in us, and his love, which is his holiness, is complete and perfect in us. What words could more expressly declare that the divine holiness consists most essentially in disinterested goodness; and that in the exercise of this, we are holy, as God is holy? To the like purpose is what Christ says to his disciples. When he is recommending to them the highest exercise of disinterested benevolence, in love to their enemies; he tells them that they would hereby imitate God, who is good to his enemies; and then says, 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' † According to this, the holiness and perfection of God and his people, consists, so much at least, in disinterested benevolence, that there is no moral perfection without it, in God or the creature. The reader will observe how exactly parallel these words of Christ are to those of St. John, we have been considering. He says, if we love one another, with a love of pure benevolence, like that which God exercised in giving his son to die for sinners, 'God dwelleth in us, and *his love is perfected in us.*' Christ says, that in the exercise of this love, his disciples shall be perfect as their heavenly Father is perfect.—

The same thing is declared by St. Paul. When speaking of God's love and mercy to sinners in forgiving sin, and of the love of Christ in dying for sinners, which are instances of disinterested goodness, he says to the Ephesian christians, 'Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children, and walk in love:‡' Here he directs christians to disinterested benevolence, by which they would imitate God's holiness, exercised in love to sinners.

Thus we see the holy love of God is represented

† Matt. v. 44, 48.

‡ Eph. iv. 32. v. 1. 2.

as consisting in disinterested benevolence and goodness, the highest and most remarkable exercise of which appears in redemption; in giving his son to die for sinners, that they might live through him; and that the holiness of men consists in imitating this benevolent love. Hence it appears that, according to scripture, holiness consists in benevolence, and what is implied in it, and in nothing else.—

OBJ. 'Tis granted that holiness consists in part in love of benevolence; especially as it respects indigent creatures: But God's holiness does not consist wholly, or chiefly, in good will to men; but in love to himself; and the holiness of men consists principally in love to God. And it does not appear from these scriptures that this love to God, either in God or the creature, is of the nature of benevolence; but may be something else; and so holiness may not consist principally in benevolent, disinterested affection.

ANS. 1st. According to these scriptures, God's love of benevolence is spoken of as the most bright and striking expression of the excellence of his nature and character, or his holiness; and that love in us which is an imitation of this love of God, is represented as that in which our conformity to God consists; which could not be true, or a proper representation, if holiness consisted chiefly in something of another kind, not included in this. We have therefore good ground to conclude from these passages, that this is the leading excellence, and the sum of all holiness in God and the creature; especially as holiness exercised toward the creature must be of the same nature with that of which God is the object. But more especially, as the object of holy love, God and the creature, is, in a sense, one and the same, or are united in one object, the kingdom of God, as has been shewn. According to this, loving our neighbour is really loving God, as love to God is implied in it. This seems to be expressed by St. John in the passage we have been considering. * N

* Dr. is parag untain velleth est proc ma grace

man hath seen God at any time, if we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us,' i. e. by loving one another, while we see and converse with each other, with the love of benevolence and kindness, in doing good to others, our love to God is expressed in the best and most perfect manner ; especially as we herein imitate God; and follow him as his dear children. *

Ans. 2d. If this love of benevolence, this amazing goodness of God's nature, expressed in redeeming sinners, and giving them eternal life through Christ, is so much the glory of the divine character, and such a clear and bright expression of his perfection and holiness, as is represented in scripture, this gives us reason to conclude that the love of which he himself is the object, is of the same nature and kind with this, viz. an infinite benevolent regard to himself ; and that his love to man, expressed in giving his son for his salvation, is a stream, and the brightest emanation from this fountain of love ; and so shews the nature of the infinite divine love and holiness. Therefore creatures have no need of any thing but this love, in order to be like God, little images of his infinite benevolence.

Ans. 3d. God's love and regard to himself is not excluded, but necessarily included in this instance of his benevolence to sinners, in giving his son to die, that they, through him, might live. This love to himself must be kept in view, in order to see his benevolence in giving his son to die for sinners ; for had God no benevolent regard to himself, and care for his own honor, there would have been no need of giving his son, that sinners might live ; as a mediator would have been needless, in order

* Dr. Doddridge has, I think, given the true sense of this text, in his paraphrase, in the following words, ' But as he [God] is the great fountain of benevolence, if we love one another, it appears that God dwelleth in us, and that his love is perfected in us ; for this is the best proof we can give of our love to him, and of the prevalence of his grace in our hearts, transforming us into his image.

order to his being reconciled to sinners. So that God's supreme regard to himself is supposed, yea expressed and brought clearly into view, in giving his son to the world. And it is that regard to himself, and his own honor, which consists in benevolence and its attendants and fruits, of which his benevolence to man is an emanation and fruit; or rather they are one and the same thing, acted out in the work of redemption. In this view, we may see how God's love in giving his son to die for sinners is a specimen, and most clear display of his holiness, which consists in benevolence, and why men are represented as imitating God in the exercise of the love of benevolence; their love to God and one another, being one and the same undivided affection.

WHAT God says to Moses, when he besought him to shew him his glory, serves to confirm what has been said on the above passages of scripture. In answer to Moses's petition, God says to him, 'I will make all my *goodness* pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee, and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.'* God here tells Moses how he would shew his glory, and what it consisted in, viz. GOODNESS; sovran goodness and mercy, which is the most disinterested benevolence possible. If God shewed Moses his glory, by causing *all his goodness* to pass before him; then God's holiness, or his moral character, consists in goodness; for holiness is his glory.—And we are told how he did this; 'The Lord passed by before him, & proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful & gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; § keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression and sin, and

* Exod. 33. 19.

§ By *truth* nothing distinct from goodness is intended: It denotes the immutability of divine goodness: It is goodness that never fails, and may be depended upon with the greatest safety. Where there is no goodness, there is no truth and faithfulness; and these are properties essential to the goodness of God.

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and that will by no means clear the guilty.' † Here there is nothing expressed but the highest, God-like benevolence or disinterested goodness. This therefore is that in which God's glory consists; consequently this is the divine holiness; and this is the glory into which men are changed by the spirit of God, when they are made partakers of his holiness.

When it is added, 'And that will by no means clear the guilty,' nothing is expressed contrary to goodness, or different from it; but it expresses the peculiar excellence and perfection of God's goodness. It is a goodness which regards the greatest good of the whole; a goodness which regards the interest and honor of the divine being; so that none of his rights shall be given up, or his law set aside in favour of man, that mercy may be shewed to him. This is the thing meant by his not clearing or acquitting the guilty. This is the same goodness which is opened and celebrated in the gospel, manifested in God's giving his son to die for the redemption of sinners, and granting them pardon and life through him. In this, God's love and regard to himself, and goodness and mercy to sinners, are joined together, as one and the same undivided thing: It is all divine benevolence; and it is the same goodness when it condemns and punishes the guilty, as when it pardons and saves the believer in Christ.—This goodness, this disinterested good will, is the glory of God: In this divine holiness, the glory of God's moral character consists; and so far as men exercise this goodness, they are holy as God is holy.

III. We are under great advantages to know what is true holiness, by the character and example of Christ. He is the great pattern of holiness, as it respects God and the creature; and the most bright and perfect instance of it, that ever was, or will be, on earth: He has acted it out to the life. He is both God and man; and if we can find what is the true moral excellence of his

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character,

† Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.

character, we shall at the same time learn what divine and creature holiness is, as it respects both God and man. It wholly consisted in conformity to that law, which he himself said was fulfilled by love to God and our neighbour : Therefore it all consisted in love : And if we properly attend to what he has said & done, we may, with the greatest certainty, determine the nature and kind of this love. His love to men was, in the highest degree, disinterested benevolence, as it was love to enemies ; and such a regard for their good, as to lead him to be willing to take their misery on himself, and bear it all, that they might escape, and live forever. This is the highest instance of pure, disinterested benevolence that ever was known ; and it is commonly spoken of as such, and the excellency of it is owned to consist very much in its being in such a striking degree *disinterested* love and goodness. Thus Christ's example of love to men consists wholly in disinterested goodness : If this is left out, there remains nothing holy and excellent.

His love to God was also a disinterested, benevolent love, as it was acted out in seeking and promoting the glory of God. He sought not his own glory, but the glory of him that sent him. And this he himself speaks of as that in which the distinguishing excellence of his character consisted. § This was the great thing he pursued, as the work he had to do. 'I have glorified thee on earth : I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.'* He subordinated every thing to this ; and for its sake, he gave up his own ease, and willingly endured the greatest sufferings. When in the view of his terrible sufferings, he was reconciled to them, and willing to go through them, it was from a zeal for God's glory ; and he expressed his whole heart in this matter, when he said, 'Father glorify thy name.'† As if he had said, 'Let God be glorified, and all my ends are answered ; for the sake of this, I have undertaken this work, and am willing to go through

§ Joh. vii. 18. viii 50.

* Joh. xvii. 4.

† Joh. xii. 28.

through the dreadful scene of sufferings that is before me.' Thus, 'Christ PLEASED NOT HIMSELF, but, as it is written, the reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.' || He pleased not himself, i. e. he sought not himself, was not in the least degree selfish; but at the greatest distance from it. He had such a strong, disinterested, benevolent regard to the glory of God, in the advancement of his kingdom, in the salvation of men, that all the reproach cast upon God by sin, fell with its full weight on him; and that he might vindicate the divine character, and take away the reproach that would come on God and his law, if sinners were saved without a complete atonement, he took the reproach and punishment of sin on himself; that hereby God might be honored in the salvation of sinners. Thus *he pleased not himself*, but practised the greatest self-denial; and took all the evil on himself, that God might be glorified, and sinners be saved: This St. Paul mentions as an example to his disciples, in following which, they must not please themselves, must not be selfish, and seek themselves; but the good of others, in the exercise of disinterested benevolence.* Thus he himself followed Christ, and imitated his holiness, while he sought not his own profit, but the profit of many, that they might be saved. §

And

|| Rom. xv. 31. * ver. 1, 2.

§ 1 Cor. x. 33. xi. 1. When the apostle says, 'I seek not mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved;' he expresses the most disinterested benevolence; and a disposition to give up every thing that could be called his own, to promote the salvation of many. In this he followed Christ, who pleased not himself, and sought not his own profit, but gave himself away, delivered himself up to infinite evil, for the sake of others, that they might be saved. These words lead us to the true sense of that passage, which has been so difficult to many. 'For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.' Rom. ix. 3. The plain meaning of these words is, that he interested himself so much in the salvation of his brethren, that he was willing to give up all his own personal interest in Christ, for their sakes, if by this means they might be saved. This is the genuine

And here, by the way, we may see how Christ sought one undivided interest in the exercise of disinterested benevolence. He was devoted to the greatest general good, the glory of God in the salvation of sinners; or that kingdom of God in which God is glorified in the highest degree, and all the good of the creature is comprised. So that his being wholly devoted to the glory of God in all he did and suffered, was not in the least inconsistent

with the expression of disinterested benevolence, which always gives up a less good for a greater, and the private good of individuals for the sake of the public good, or the salvation of many. Therefore, if the apostle could save all his brethren by giving up his own personal interest in Christ, he ought to be ready to do it; for not to do it, in this case, would be to seek his own profit, in opposition to the profit of many, and to act most contrary to benevolence; and to the example of Christ, who gave himself a ransom for many, and was willingly *made a curse*, that men might be saved from it.

I know there have been many objections made to this sense of the words. It is said, this represents the apostle as willing to be an enemy to Christ, and to be damned forever, which is impossible.

Ans. It is indeed a contradiction, that he should be willing to become an enemy to Christ, in the exercise of that benevolence in which he imitated him, and acted as his friend: especially that this benevolence should *make him willing* to be Christ's enemy. But no such thing is expressed in the words. The apostle might be willing to give up his own personal interest in Christ, for the sake of the salvation of millions, & yet not be willing to be an enemy to Christ: And indeed it was impossible he should be an enemy to him, while in the exercise of such benevolence; just as impossible as it was that he should be willing his brethren should all be lost, while he was ardently wishing their salvation, tho' it were at the expence of his own.

As to his being willing to be damned; he was willing to give up all the happiness, and suffer all the evil which was consistent with his benevolence to his brethren, and the love to Christ implied in this: But this benevolence was inconsistent with his being really miserable; for he would be so gratified in their salvation by his means, and he so placed his happiness in this, that he must be in a great degree happy, much more so than he could be in any possible enjoyment, which he should have, at the expence of their salvation, or while destitute of this benevolence.

I am sensible this sense of the words is most contrary to all *selfish religion*; but it is perfectly consistent with that charity, that disinterested benevolence, which 'seeketh not her own,' but the profit of many, that they may be saved; without which it is impossible to be a true follower of Christ,

sistent with his benevolence to man, nor did in any degree exclude it ; but the latter is implied in the former, and the more benevolence he exercised towards God in seeking his glory, the more love did he exercise and discover to man : So that Christ did not only seek the glory of God, and the salvation of men, and express his love to God and man, in the same actions ; but this was one and the same undivided affection, which centered in one and the same thing, the greatest happiness and glory of God's kingdom, or the greatest good of the whole ; so that he really sought but one thing, which is all comprised in the glory of God. And this may serve to remove a difficulty which has risen in the minds of some persons, with respect to this. They have asked, 'If the ultimate end of Christ in what he did and suffered was the glory of God, so that this was the greatest, and in a sense, the only thing he had in view, and this induced him to be willing to suffer unto death ; how can he be said to lay down his life for man, out of pure benevolence to him ? He never would have done this, had it not been for the love he had to God, and regard for his glory. What reason then has the sinner to thank him, for doing it out of love to him ? Certainly if he was chiefly influenced in this by love to God, his regard to man had but a proportionably small influence in this affair.'

The solution is, the benevolence which Christ exercised towards God, and towards men, is one undivided affection. The glory of God, and the salvation of men by Christ, are not to be distinguished, as different objects of pursuit. Therefore in seeking the glory of God, he sought the salvation of men, and in seeking the salvation of men, he sought the glory of God, the one being necessarily included in the other. And in this does the holiness, the moral excellence of Christ consist, according to scripture. Therefore we are left at no loss about the nature of true holiness in God and in the creature. It consists in disinterested benevolence, and all that affection which

which is included in this, in opposition to self-love.

OBJ. But Christ himself sought his own interest and glory, and had respect to the recompence of reward ; *‘ who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, ’* &c. *

ANS. 1. Jesus Christ, in the exercise of disinterested benevolence, sought the glory of God, and the highest happiness and glory of his kingdom in the salvation of men, as the greatest good. In this he placed his happiness and joy. This was the great end he sought in enduring the cross, this was the joy that was set before him. Therefore he was so far from pleasing or seeking himself in this, that the reward he sought was the object of disinterested affection, and nothing else. His benevolence set this up as a good, for the sake of which he was willing to give up his life, and suffer an ignominious death.

ANS. 2. Christ's own honor and interest is included in the glory of God, and the greatest good of the creation. As God, his own glory is the same with the glory of the Father : As man, his interest is great, as well as of infinite importance to the good of the whole. Therefore, as has been shewn, disinterested benevolence, or love to God and men, implies a regard to himself, and a joy in his own happiness and glory. There is not the least degree of selfishness in this ; but 'tis essential to disinterested benevolence.

IV. We may learn what is the nature of true holiness from what Christ says to his disciples : *‘ Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy ; but I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, — that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven ; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good. — For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye ? Do not even the Publicans* the

* Heb. xii. 2.

the same?—Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' †

On this passage of scripture we may observe the following things :

1. What our Saviour here condemns is *selfishness*; which had been, by the Jewish teachers, justified and inculcated, as true holiness, and obedience to the divine law; requiring us to love our neighbour as ourselves. By our neighbour, they understood one who is kind to us, and our hearty friend. And our enemy they distinguished from neighbour, and put in opposition to him, and taught that the latter is to be hated, that it is our duty to do so, and the former loved. This interpretation made the command very easy indeed, and brought it down to suit the heart of the most wicked man on earth. And all the selfish religion that is taught now, is as agreeable to corrupt nature, as this was then ; which leads me to observe,

2. Christ condemns this, and enjoins directly the contrary, even the most disinterested good will, in loving our worst enemy, with that kind, benevolent affection, which will lead us to do him all the good in our power.

3. He shews that this selfish love has nothing of the nature of true holiness, by observing that sinners, even the worst of them, exercised such love. They love those that love them ; for selfishness itself will do this. And by the way, Christ not only condemns selfishness here, as no part of holiness, and in opposition to it ; but his argument supposes that Publicans and sinners, yea, all that are not the children of God, are wholly destitute of holiness ; for if they were not, his argument would not be conclusive.

4. Therefore love to enemies is here enjoined as essential to the character of a disciple of Christ ; so that no love which does not imply this disinterested benevolence, or love to enemies, is the love in which holiness consists, by

† Matt. v. 43—48.

by which the true disciples of Christ are distinguished from others ; every thing else, which does not imply this, being found with sinners. According to this, disinterested benevolence, or that love which will extend to enemies, is the holy love which distinguishes the true disciples of Christ from all others, and nothing will pass for true holiness in Christ's account, but such love, and what is implied in it.

5. It is by such love alone that they are conformed to God, and formed after the likeness of his moral perfection or holiness. When Christ tells his disciples, that by loving their enemies, they should be the children of their Father which is in heaven, i. e, imitators or followers of God as dear children, it is implied that they could become so by nothing else. So that in this view, this kind of love is represented as the only holy love, as 'tis the only love by which they imitate God. And it hence follows also, that this is the love in which the divine holiness consists : For if it consisted in any thing of another kind, which this did not imply, they might be like God without love to their enemies. According to this representation, God's holiness, which consists in love to himself and his creatures, is such, that it carries in its nature love to enemies ; and therefore that love which is not of such a nature, is not true holiness. Therefore the christian's love to God and Christ is of the same nature with love to enemies, which is disinterested benevolence ; and in this his holiness consists.

6. We may also observe from this passage, though 'tis not immediately to the point we are upon, that the holy love by which christians are distinguished from others, will love God even though he were our enemy ; therefore it is not necessary we should see him to be our friend, or that he loves us, in order to our loving him. They who hold this, and that all true love to God is of this kind, teach a selfish religion, directly contrary to what Christ taught, and which he said publicans and sinners might have

have as well as christians. If we cannot be Christ's disciples, unless we have a heart to love our enemies, even such as are so unjustly, and are doing us all the injury they can; then none are his disciples who have not a heart to love God, even though he is their enemy, and disposed to curse and destroy them; who cannot be an unjust and injurious enemy. Surely that disposition which will love an enemy, who is unjustly and injuriously so, will not find it hard to love an enemy, who is so with the highest reason and justice. And all true love to God is of this kind; it is such a generous, disinterested, benevolent affection, that it is so far from originating from a belief of his love to us, that we should continue to love him, even though he appeared to be our enemy; and that love which would fail in this case, is not true holiness. Therefore it is certain, that he who does not love his enemies, does not love God with a true holy love. This is, at least, implicitly asserted here by our Saviour.

V. That all true holiness consists in disinterested, benevolent affection, and what is implied in this, is evident from what St. Paul says, 1 Cor. xiii. Here the apostle speaks of charity as comprising all real holiness, or true religion; by which he means that love to God and our neighbour, which the law of God requires. *

He says, whatever gifts and attainments a man may have, which may be without this love, he is still nothing, and they will be no profit to him. And whatever exercises he has, and whatever he may do or suffer, and not have this love, he is yet nothing; by which it is very strongly asserted, that love is true holiness, and that nothing else has any thing of this nature. In giving the character of this holy love in its exercises, he says, *IT SEEKETH NOT HER OWN.* § This ascertains the nature of
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* The word in the original signifies *love*, and ought to have been so translated here, as it is above an hundred times in the new testament.

this love beyond dispute. It is not self-love, in whole or in part; for this always seeks it's own, and nothing else. Yea, 'tis set in opposition to self-love, it *SEEKETH* NOT her own. Nothing can answer to this description but that disinterested affection which consists in benevolence, and what is implied in it; and this answers to it exactly. It is so described here, that nothing else can be meant. Therefore the apostle exhorts christians to exercise this same holy love, in the following words, 'Let no man seek his own: But every man another's wealth.' † Let no man seek his own, i. e. *as his own*, in a selfish way. All selfishness is wholly forbidden. Let him put on that holy love which seeketh not her own; but something else, viz. the general good of all. This charity, this benevolent, disinterested affection, is the only bond of holy union among intelligent beings; therefore it is called the bond of perfectness, i. e. the most perfect bond. ‡

VI. The words of St. Paul, 'Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God,' § might be mentioned here as pointing out the nature of holiness, as exercised towards God. It is such a love to God, which implies and consists in seeking his glory constantly, in every action. But nothing but benevolence will do this. It is strange that any should think good will is not to be exercised towards God, when we are in every thing to seek his glory; for the least reflection on the matter, must convince every one, that nothing but good will, or friendly affection towards God, will seek his glory, or care any thing about it. This is to be constantly exercised towards God; so as in the strength of it to devote our selves, every action, all we are, and all we have, to his interest and glory. And this is to exercise kind, disinterested affection towards God; in which we give up every other interest, for the sake of his glory.

VII. Christians

† 1 Cor. x. 24.

‡ Col. iii. 14.

§ 1 Cor. x. 31.

VII. Christians are expressly said to live not unto themselves, but unto Christ. 'And that he died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth *live unto themselves*, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth unto himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord.'* Here the christian's life of holiness, is set in opposition to self-love, in which men live unto themselves; which was their case before their conversion, and denotes a state of total corruption: I say, christian holiness is opposed to this, and therefore must be disinterested affection; a benevolent regard to Christ, by which men devote themselves wholly to him, living to his glory, and seeking the advancement of his kingdom; which implies love to men, and seeking the greatest general good.

VIII. Scripture holiness is that by which men devote and consecrate themselves to God, to be wholly for his use and service. This is expressed by being *holy unto God*; it is therefore called, *holiness to the Lord*. It is with reference to this that all men & things, which were in a peculiar manner consecrated to the service of God by the Jewish ritual, were called *holy*; as there was in this consecration an outward image and resemblance of true holiness; which is a voluntary consecration to God, and devotedness to his service. This is the same with *giving themselves to the Lord*. §

This will lead us to place holiness in that universal benevolence, which has the kingdom of God for its object, and subordinates all to this. This consecrates a man to God, his honor, interest and kingdom, in the strongest manner; and effectually draws him off from every other interest: and no other kind of affection will do this.—Therefore this is holiness, according to scripture.

Who can attend to this scripture account of holiness, and not be sensible that universal, disinterested goodness

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* 2 Cor. v. 15. Rom. xiv. 7, 8.

§ 2 Cor. viii. 5

is the leading and most essential thing in it; and that where this is wanting, there is no holiness; and this implies the whole? The word *love* is seldom, if ever, used in any other sense in the bible, where a holy affection is meant. And this is perfectly agreeable to the account that has been given of true holiness, which is the only reasonable, consistent idea that can be given of it, viz. That it is universal benevolence, and all that love of complacency and delight, and every disinterested affection which is implied in this; and cannot take place without it.



SECTION VII.

Answers to several objections against the foregoing account of true holiness.

OBJ. I. **T**RUE christians ought to have respect to the reward they shall receive in heaven, for what they do & suffer in this world. It is expressly asserted that Moses had; & is spoken of as part of the excellence of his character. This is contrary to the *disinterested* affection, in which it is said all true religion consists.

Ans. 1. If the recompence of reward, that Moses had respect to, consisted in being confirmed in God's service and favour forever, and put under the greatest advantages to glorify God, and promote the interest of his church, and in seeing this accomplished to the highest degree; then there was nothing selfish in this, but it was the genuine exercise of that disinterested religion, which consists in love to God and our neighbour. The disinterested, benevolent person seeks a recompence of reward, as much as any other person can, and more; but 'tis a reward with which benevolence itself is well pleased, and not selfishness. Selfishness never seeks the reward which God gives his people; this is suited to gratify benevolence only:

ly : Therefore it is respected and sought only in the exercise of benevolence.

Ans. 2. It has been observed, that the benevolent person seeks his own highest good, as this is included in the highest good of the whole ; and that his attention and concern is more particularly turned to this interest, as 'tis more in his view, and is more especially under his care, and he is under better advantages to promote it, than the interest of another. Therefore it is no argument of selfishness in Moses, or any other man, that he has respect to his own future happiness.

Obj. II. The promises and threatenings in God's word are all directed to self-love. They suppose that all men have self-love, and are suited to influence this, and nothing else. If a person has nothing but disinterested affection, promises & threatenings will be of no use to him. If men ought not to have any self-love, why does God address himself to that in his word, and seek to lead men to avoid sin, and practise holiness, in the exercise of self-love ?

Ans. 1. The promises and threatenings in the word of God, suppose men possessed of a desire after happiness, with an aversion to evil, and a regard for their own interest, answerable to its worth. This is so far from being inconsistent with the most disinterested affection, that it is implied in it, as has been proved at large.* Therefore promises of good, and threatenings of evil, are as much suited to influence the benevolent person, as him that is selfish.

Ans. 2. The good promised is a good which benevolence seeks, and it has the most perfect aversion to the evil threatened ; and the benevolent person has a much more clear and realizing view and sense of the greatness and desirableness of the good, and the dreadfulness of the evil, than the selfish person can have. This being so, the promises and threatenings in the bible are so far from supposing that men ought to regard them from self-love, or that

* See page 19, 20, 21.

that there is any selfishness in true religion, that their proper end is answered only in them who are influenced by disinterested benevolence ; and such only pay a proper regard to them. The selfish person may be influenced many ways, and to a great degree, by the threatenings and promises in God's word : They may excite high hopes and great fears, and restrain him from many things he would otherwise practice, and lead him to do many things ; but they will not influence him to forsake sin, and practice holiness, or to love God and his neighbour ; but after all, he is as much under the power of sin as ever.

And it is to be observed, that the promises are not made to selfish exercises and doings ; and therefore, rightly understood, are not suited to encourage self-love, but benevolence. All the promises & threatenings in the bible oppose selfishness, & are calculated to destroy it, & encourage disinterested affection, love to God and our neighbour ; so far are they from encouraging self-love.

Christ promises honor and exaltation to them who humble themselves. Should any one hence infer, that this promise was designed to encourage pride in seeking exaltation and honor, and that pride is a duty, he would be guilty of great absurdity and self-contradiction ; for this would be saying, a man ought to exercise pride in seeking humility ; and that Christ has set before us a motive to excite pride, in order to induce us to be humble. This promise is so far from encouraging pride, that it tends to destroy it. The honor and exaltation promised, is not that which pride seeks, but that which is most opposite to it. And should a proud man be hence influenced by his pride, to seek humility, he might put on some external appearances of it ; but he would be as far as ever from real humility, for by the supposition, all his exercises are exercises of pride ; and humility is not the object of his desire, but of his aversion. This may serve to illustrate the case before us, and shew how far the divine promises are from being suited to encourage pride and selfishness ;

selfishness ; and that they encourage nothing but benevolence. And it also leads to another answer.

ANS. 3. The great and chief good which is promised in the word of God, is not a good that pleases selfish persons, and therefore is not designed nor suited to excite self-love.* As the duties to which the promises are made, are contrary to self-love ; so is the chief good that is promised. The honor and exaltation promised to humility, are as contrary to pride, as is humility itself. The honor which the proud man seeks, is not the same which Christ promises to him who humbleth himself ; but entirely of a different nature, and contrary to it. A person who humbles himself, renounces that self-exaltation and honor, in comparison with other beings, which pride and selfishness seek ; and places his honor and happiness in abasing himself, & becoming the servant of all, by exalting God, and promoting his glory, and serving his fellow-creatures ; ministering to their greatest good, in the exercise of universal benevolence ; and so obtains true exaltation and honor, which is most contrary to selfishness and pride. So the happiness in general, which is the subject of divine promises, is not a happiness which suits self-love, nor can it be induced to desire and seek it. This is a happiness which consists in glorifying God and promoting the interest of his kingdom : In devoting ourselves wholly to this ; and seeing it promoted to the highest degree. This good is therefore just as contrary to self-love, as is universal, disinterested benevolence. This good is suited to please the benevolent, and excite them to pursue the practice of holiness, and seek this glory, honor and happiness ; but to self-love, is the object of aversion.

If these things are well considered, it will appear how groundless this objection is. If the benevolent person is as capable of being influenced by promises and threatenings, as any one else, and much more ; and these are suited to animate him in the practice
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of disinterested, universal benevolence and goodness.— If the promises and threatenings in the bible are, in a peculiar manner, suited to encourage and promote benevolence.— If neither the duty to which the promises are made, nor the chief good promised, is agreeable to self-love, nor can be chosen and embraced by it : Then there being so many promises & threatenings in the bible, is not the least evidence that true religion does not consist in disinterested affection, or that self-love is any part of it. But the contrary appears with strong and irresistible evidence, even from these considerations.—

OBJ. III. There is not such a difference and opposition between what is called benevolence and self-love, as has been supposed ; nor is there any such thing as *disinterested* benevolence ; men are seeking their own happiness in all their affections and exercises. He that seeks the good of another, does it because he takes pleasure in it ; and he seeks his own pleasure and happiness as much as he who seeks his own personal good only ; and the one is as much self-love as the other, And men are friendly to one thing rather than another, because one gives them pleasure, and the other does not : So that self-love is at the bottom of all ; and one man is really as selfish as another ; all the difference is, one man's selfishness operates in a different way from that of another man : All love springs from self-love, and cannot be distinguished from it.

Ans. 1. If by self-love the objector means a general appetite to happiness, and aversion to misery, or a capacity of pleasure and pain ; 'tis granted that this takes place in benevolence, as much as in self-love. But, as has been shewn, this is in itself neither selfishness, nor disinterested affection ; but only a capacity for either.

Ans. 2. 'Tis true that disinterested affection gives a higher pleasure and enjoyment than self-love ; and therefore 'tis greatly for a person's interest to place his happiness in the glory of God, and the interest of his kingdom,
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and the greatest good of mankind : But it does not hence follow, that the pleasure to be enjoyed in loving God and our neighbour is the cause of this love ; or the inducement to a selfish person to love God, in order to answer a selfish end, and make himself happy. I say, this does not follow, for two reasons :

1. This is to put the cause for the effect, and the effect for the cause. The ground and reason of a person's taking pleasure in the happiness of his neighbour, is his disinterested good will to him ; and not this pleasure the cause of his good will to his neighbour. But the objector supposes the latter, viz. that the pleasure a person has in benevolence is the cause of his loving his neighbour, which is absurd.

2. There is a contradiction in supposing that self-love will lead a person to place his happiness in his neighbour's good ; for the latter stands in direct contradiction to the former. Selfishness is directly opposed to a person's placing his happiness in the good of another : This consists in an opposite affection, which selfishness cannot be reconciled to. Nor can the selfish person so much as have an idea of the enjoyment which attends benevolence ; and therefore 'tis impossible that the happiness benevolence gives, should be a prevailing motive with him, to love and seek the happiness of another, that he may hereby make himself happy.

If one should suppose that because exaltation and honor is the certain attendant of humility, this will induce a proud man, in the exercise of his pride, to be humble, for the sake of the honor he will obtain by it ; and therefore that pride & humility are at bottom the same thing, & seek the same honor, the supposition would be as consistent and rational, as that we are considering.

If a person places his happiness in the good of his neighbour, it may be asked, how came he to do this, rather than another ; & by what medium does he enjoy this pleasure ? The answer must be this ; the former is a friend to his neighbour,

bour, and this gives him pleasure in his happiness : Whereas the latter is not his friend, and bears no good will to him, but regards his own interest only, and therefore cannot take pleasure in his neighbour's good. The character of these two men are essentially different ; their exercises are of a different and opposite nature ; the latter is a lover of his own self only ; the former loves his neighbour as himself, and is so united to him, in disinterested good will, that he necessarily shares in his happiness. In this case he does not love his neighbour, in order to get possession of his happiness, this is not the motive of his benevolence ; for this is a contradiction. It is impossible he should get possession of his neighbour's happiness in this way, & from this motive, for so far as he acts from such a motive, he, by the supposition, cares nothing about it, and it is no happiness to him. Nothing but disinterested benevolence will give him a share in his neighbour's good ; this is the ground and cause of his enjoying it, and not a desire of enjoying this happiness the ground of his benevolence. So far as a man desires to enjoy his neighbour's happiness from self-love, just so far he is incapable of enjoying it. The more he desires it therefore, in this sense, the further he is from it.

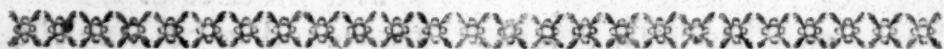
Ans. 3. Disinterested good will, which puts a man in possession of his neighbour's happiness, also makes him share in his misery, if he is miserable, and bear his burdens. But this is most contrary to self-love ; therefore it is opposed to benevolence. If self-love would lead a person to take pleasure in his neighbour's happiness, and share in his good, and this were possible ; it would not certainly, desire to share in his misery, and so put him in possession of that too. But benevolence does this, therefore 'tis not self-love, nor the fruit and offspring of it ; but an affection of a different and opposite nature.

Obj. IV. Holiness consists, in part, in hatred of sin ; therefore it does not wholly consist in love ; for hatred is opposite to love.

Ans.

Ans. Hatred of sin is not opposed to the love of benevolence ; for we may love them who are most vile and odious, with a love of good will, and are commanded to do it. And God loved sinners with the greatest benevolence, while they were most odious to him, and hated them with a perfect hatred of disapprobation and displicence. Thus we may, and are obliged to love and hate the same persons at the same time, in many instances, to love them with a love of good will, and yet hate them with a hatred of displicence.

Nor is this displicence, and hatred of sin, opposed to the love of complacence, so as to imply any thing of a contrary nature. Hatred of sin is implied in all holy love ; and that affection which takes complacence in holiness, is exercised in the hatred of sin ; it being in its nature one and the same thing, exercised towards different objects. Love to God is, in its nature, displeasure at enmity against him ; and necessarily hates those who hate him ; not with the hatred of ill will, but of disapprobation and displicence.



S E C T I O N VIII.

Inferences from the foregoing account of the nature of true holiness.

I. **F**ROM the view that has been given of holiness, we are led to observe the impropriety many have been guilty of in speaking of holy, christian love, as consisting chiefly, if not wholly, in love of complacence. It has been very common, where love to God, and love to our brother is spoken of and explained, very much, if not wholly, to overlook the love of benevolence, and keep the love of complacence chiefly or altogether in view. This is not agreeable to scripture, which I trust appears from

from what has been said. The love of benevolence is chiefly kept in view there, as what comprehends the whole of holy love; and we cannot have, or communicate a proper notion of holiness, if we depart from the holy scripture in this particular. This has doubtless been the occasion of great confusion, and many mistakes.

II. We may hence learn what true *self-denial* is, and in what it consists.

Our Lord teaches us, that in becoming his disciple, a man must deny himself: That there is no other way to be a christian; and this must be practised in every step in which men follow him, 'If any man will come after me, let him *deny himself*, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.' * This self-denial consists, most essentially in acting contrary to self-love, in crossing that, & giving up the interest that it seeks, for the sake of some other interest; or in giving up our own private, personal interest, for the sake of the glory of God, & the greatest good of mankind; which is the same with exercising disinterested affection; or to love God with all our heart, & our neighbour as ourselves. Self-denial consists in the exercise and practice of true holiness, as it has been described above, and in nothing else; in which self is renounced, & men forsake the whole interest which self-love seeks, for the sake of the kingdom of God. Whatever men do or suffer, whatever they give up, for the sake of this, they deny themselves; and where there is nothing of this disinterested love exercised, there is no self-denial, whatever is done or suffered; as self is not in the least renounced. Christ himself is the most perfect example of self-denial; which consisted in seeking not his own glory, but the glory of the Father, and the greatest good of the creation, in promoting the kingdom of God, the whole of which is expressed by the apostle in the following words, 'For even Christ *pleased not himself*.'

Self-denial does not therefore consist merely in crossing
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* Luk. ix. 23.

our natural inclinations, in parting with that which is very dear to us, or going through great toil and sufferings, to obtain some end. When this is done, not for our own sake, or from self-love; but for Christ's sake, or for the sake of the kingdom of God, it is true self-denial. But when it is done for our own sakes wholly, there is no self-denial in it. The most selfish creature in the world may part with one good for the sake of another, by which he greatly crosses some of his inclinations and appetites; and may go through great labour and sufferings, purely to please himself, or gratify his self-love. Thus a man may give up his ease, and practice hard service and toil, throughout a whole year, for the sake of the wages he is to receive, while he is wholly selfish in what he does and suffers, having no regard to any other interest but his own. So a man may be willing to do and suffer many things, and cross many of his own natural inclinations to a great degree, for the sake of his eternal interest, that he may obtain salvation, purely from self-love. In this there is no self-denial.

A man may give all his goods to the poor, and devote his whole life to the most severe discipline, and practice the greatest austerities imaginable; and then give his body to be burned, with a view to escape hell, and obtain heaven; and yet if he has not that charity which seeketh not her own, but does and suffers all wholly under the influence of self-love, there is no true self-denial in it; but it is as really self-gratification, and pleasing himself, as if he indulged his sensual appetites in riot and wantonness; and there is really no more true religion in it. For there is no more true holiness in desiring and seeking eternal happiness in a selfish way, and from self-love, than there is in desiring any temporal, worldly enjoyment.*

But

* Of this sort, we have reason to think, are all the abstinences, fastings, prayers, whippings and austerities, as well as giving large sums of money, practised by multitudes in the popish world, for the sake of obtaining the heaven they have in view. And of the same kind are

But here two questions arise, which may be worthy of particular consideration, as it may serve to throw some further light on this subject.

QUEST. I. Do persons give up their *eternal interest* in self-denial, so as not to have a selfish regard to this in their religious exercises? 'Tis easy to see that persons may and ought to give up their own private, temporal interest, in many instances, at least, and to a great degree, for the sake of others, and to promote the greater general good. — But is it not unreasonable, and even impossible, for them to disregard and give up their own *eternal interest*, for the sake of others, or for any thing whatsoever? —

Ans. 1. Whatever temporal good any one gives up for the sake of his own eternal interest, and wholly from self-love, he is, by the supposition, as selfish in this, as he can be in any thing whatsoever; and therefore there is no self-denial in it, if self denial is acting contrary to self, or denying ourselves. So that he who does not know how to deny himself with respect to his eternal interest, is really a stranger to self-denial. To give up our temporal, worldly interest, for the sake of eternal happiness, wholly under the influence of self-love, is as real an instance of selfishness, as parting with all we have now, to possess a large estate the next year. Therefore, if no person can renounce his eternal interest, in opposition to a selfish regard to it, there is no such thing in nature as self-denial, or public, disinterested affection. But let it be kept in mind, that in the practice of the greatest self-denial, a person does not divest himself of a love of happiness; for this is impossible, as has been shewn, as well as contrary

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are all the labours and painful doings and sufferings; all the reformations and abstinences; yea, every thing else that men do or suffer in the practice of religion, and with a view to obtain salvation, in the protestant world, or any where else, who act wholly from self-love, and have no disinterested regard to Christ and his kingdom. There is no self-denial in all this. — But, by the way, the heaven and happiness which these selfish persons are seeking by all their pains, whether in popish or protestant countries, is no more like the true happiness and eaven, than is the mahometan paradise.

to the supposition. But he places his happiness, not in his own private interest ; but in a good more worthy to be sought, viz. the glory of God, and the prosperity of his church and kingdom. For the sake of this, he gives up the former, and forgets himself.

Ans. 2. There is the same reason why self-love should be wholly crossed, in every instance, as there is that it should be crossed at all ; so the same reason that our whole interest, so far as 'tis the object of self-love, should be given up, for the sake of an interest of unspeakable more worth.

True benevolence always seeks the greatest good of the whole ; and is a disposition to give up the less good for the greater. That affection which hesitates at this, and makes any selfish conditions, is private affection, not public love. If benevolence will lead us to forsake our personal interest, in any degree, it will lead us to forsake it *wholly*, for the greater good of others, if it is exercised to a sufficient degree, and there is nothing selfish in us to counter-act and oppose it.

If we consider what GOD is, how infinitely great, important and desirable, and of what infinite worth are his being, happiness and glory ; and how infinitely worthy and excellent he is : What an absolute and infinite right he has to us, and to all creatures, to dispose of them as he sees fit, in his infinite wisdom and goodness, for his own happiness and glory, and for the greatest glory and happiness of his kingdom : I say, if we well consider this, it must appear most fit and reasonable, that we should love him above all, and without any reserve, i. e. with all our hearts, &c. and give up ourselves *wholly* to him, to be for his use, that his ends may be answered by us ; and he be, in the highest degree, blessed, and glorified, and his kingdom most happy and glorious forever, let what will become of us, and without making any conditions with regard to ourselves. Therefore it becomes us always to feel so towards GOD, and place our whole

whole happiness in his felicity and glory; having in this sense, no will of our own. But this is denying ourselves, and giving up the whole of our own interest for his sake. A choosing to be wholly devoted to him, and to be and do every thing wholly for his sake, is to choose to do nothing for our own sakes; which is to give up the whole that self-love seeks.

If we make conditions in this case, and are willing that God should be supreme, and have the whole disposal of us, and glorify himself by us, IF he will secure our highest personal interest, and employ all his wisdom and goodness in our behalf; but are disposed to oppose this, on any other condition; there is no disinterested affection to God in this, nor indeed any true love to him; nor is there any self-denial in it: Yea, it is itself real opposition to God; and the most selfish creature, and the greatest enemy to God in the universe, may be brought to this, consistent with all his selfishness and enmity.

It is true, indeed, as has been shewn, that the most disinterested affection does not exclude proper regard to our own being and interest; but necessarily includes it: But it must be observed, that if our own personal interest is inconsistent with the general good; universal benevolence will give it all up, for the sake of this greater good; for to be unwilling to give up our own interest, when the public good requires it, is criminal selfishness, and enmity to being in general; and therefore enmity against God.

For the same reason for which I shall be willing that the interest of any individual in the universe should not be regarded, but given up, when inconsistent with the general good, I shall be willing to give up my own interest, on the same supposition, if I am governed by benevolence. Therefore, however great and important is our whole interest, temporal and eternal, we ought to be willing to give it all up, if it is inconsistent with the highest interest, the greatest glory of HIM who is at the head of the uni-

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verse, and the sum of all being and perfection; and true benevolence will do this; since the latter interest is infinitely greater, and more important than the former, and that not worthy of any regard, in comparison with this.

But this leads to another question.

QUEST. II. How can our eternal interest be inconsistent with the greatest display of God's glory, and the highest interest of his kingdom? Are not these so united together, that they cannot be separated; how then can the former be given up, for the sake of the latter?—

ANS. If we know that we are true christians, we may be sure that 'tis for the glory of God, and good of the whole, that we should be eternally happy in his kingdom. But even in this case, we are capable of making the supposition that it would not be so; and, on this supposition, we shall be disposed to give up all our personal interest, so far as we are in the exercise of disinterested affection, and willing to deny ourselves.—But if we do not know that we have embraced the gospel, we cannot be sure that 'tis, on the whole, most for the honor of God, and the glory and happiness of his kingdom, that our eternal happiness should be secured: So we have opportunity to try how we shall feel, and be disposed, on such a supposition. In this case, the language of supreme love to God will be to this purpose: 'Let infinite wisdom dictate. Let GOD reign, and dispose of me and all creatures, so as shall be most for his own glory, and the greatest good of the whole, whatever becomes of me, and my interest.' In this case, not to have infinite wisdom order; not to have GOD supreme, and dispose as pleases him, so as to glorify himself in the highest degree, and make his kingdom most perfect and happy, would be a greater evil, infinitely greater, to the true friend of God and his kingdom, than the giving up his own personal interest: Yea, on supposition his own interest and highest happiness is inconsistent with the glory of God, it will be worth nothing, and worse than nothing to him. He will therefore say

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with Moses, 'Blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book.' If God may not be God, and order all things for his own glory, and the greatest good of his kingdom; and if my salvation is inconsistent with this, I give all up, I have no interest of my own to seek or desire.

It is true, he who has such disinterested, benevolent exercises, must be happy so long as God reigns, and is glorified, and his kingdom is in the highest degree advanced; because this, by the supposition, is become his good, or he places his happiness in this. And when he comes to know, that he is thus devoted to God, he may be sure of his own eternal salvation. But let it be observed, he must *first* have such exercises of disinterested affection as these, before he can have any evidence that he shall be saved; for he must become a friend to God, before he can have any evidence that he is interested in his favour, and shall inherit eternal life.

QUEST. III. How can we in any case give up our own eternal interest for God's sake, and for the interest of his kingdom, since by devoting ourselves to God, we take the most sure and the only way to secure and promote our own highest good, in our eternal salvation: Is there not an inconsistency in this?

Ans. Though a person by giving himself to God in the exercise of disinterested affection, in this way denying himself for God's sake, does indeed take the most direct and effectual way to true happiness, and to secure and promote his highest interest: Yet he as really gives it up for God's sake, as if he did not secure and promote it in this way. And he does as truly deny himself, as if he did really and eternally lose his whole interest.—Therefore it does not hence follow that he is selfish, and seeks his own private interest in giving himself to God, and loving God more than himself: For this is a contradiction, being the same as to say, he is selfish, and loves himself more than God, in renouncing self, and loving God more than himself, and doing all for God's sake.

Christ,

Christ, when speaking of self-denial, says, 'Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.' * That is, he who is so selfish, as not to be willing to deny himself, and give up his own interest, even all of it, for my sake, out of a disinterested regard to me, and my kingdom, he shall miss of all true happiness, and must necessarily lose it forever. But he, who in the exercise of disinterested affection, denies himself for Christ's sake and the gospel's, & places his happiness in Christ's honor and interest, shall be really happy, and secure his highest interest forever. But it does not follow from this, that a man seeks his own life and happiness in a selfish way, and so does all for his own sake, in losing his life for Christ's sake and the gospel's; for this involves a contradiction. And if this could be, it would not be self-denial, but self-gratification.

III. What has been said of the nature of holiness, will help us to distinguish between true religion, and that which is false. The leading and most essential difference lies here: True religion consists in disinterested affection, and 'seeketh not her own:'. False religion wholly consists in selfish affections and exercises. The former is true holiness; the latter is nothing but sin.

This will serve as a touch-stone, by which we may try the various doctrines and schemes of religion, which are embraced and contended for by professed christians. If they are the dictates of universal, disinterested benevolence, and suited to please and promote this, they are doctrines according to godliness. But if they are suited to gratify self-love only, and formed on a selfish plan, they have no foundation in scripture.

There are many who professedly make self-love the foundation of all religion, & represent it as wholly a selfish thing, from beginning to end. They do so, who teach that love to God, and all practical religion has its foundation

* Mark, viii. 35.

tion wholly in a belief that God loves us, and has forgiven our sins; and that the faith by which the just do live, consists most essentially in this belief. And this selfishness is involved in the scheme of religion that many others embrace. The *five points*, so long disputed between calvinists and arminians, being examined by this criterion, it will appear, I doubt not, on which side the truth lies. The latter form a scheme of doctrines exactly suited to gratify the selfishness and pride of man; to exalt men, at the expence of the honor of God, and happiness and glory of his kingdom. That of the former is suited to exalt God, and display the glory of his grace, in the happiness and glory of his moral kingdom; and therefore is most agreeable to the dictates of universal benevolence. § He whose head and heart are truly formed upon this disinterested, benevolent plan, will not find it difficult to distinguish between those doctrines which are the dictates of selfishness and pride; and such as are suited to exalt God, and abase man, and set up the glory of God, and his kingdom, as the supreme end of all: And will cordially embrace the latter, and renounce the former.

And this will help us to a rule to *try the spirits* of men, so far as we are to judge of their hearts by their practice. A man appears to have true religion, who embraces the doctrines which are *according to godliness*, and appears to be devoted to the honor of God, and the redeemer, and the advancement of his interest and kingdom in the world; for which he is at all times ready to spend, and be spent. And he is kind to his fellow men, doing good to all as he has opportunity; and especially good to the professed friends of Christ and his kingdom. He puts on 'bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind,

§ The doctrines here referred to are, 1. God's decrees. 2. Original sin. 3. Man's moral impotency. 4. Justification by faith, through imputed righteousness. 5. The perseverance of the saints. Calvinists take the positive side. Arminians the negative.

mind, meekness, long-suffering, &c. * And if a person appears in his life and conversation to be wholly selfish and proud; seeking his own ease, pleasure and honor, rather than the honor of Christ, and the promotion of his kingdom, and the good of mankind; whatever doctrines he professes to embrace, and however full of religious zeal and devotion, he may appear to be at times, we have reason to conclude he is a stranger to true religion.

And by this rule every one may try his own religion. If it began in a belief that God loved him, and had bestowed salvation upon him, &c. and all his religious joy and sorrow, and darkness and light, respect his own interest in God's favour, &c. it has the appearance of false religion. * He who comes to the knowledge of the truth, fixes

* Col. iii. 12. It is worthy of observation, that a kind, benevolent spirit, exercised towards men; especially the saints, in doing them good, is much spoken of in scripture, as an evidence of true religion. And the reason of this appears from the foregoing account of true holiness.

* OBJ. St. John taught this religion. He says, 'We love him, because he first loved us,' 1 Joh. iv. 19.

ANS. What is asserted here is, that God's love is first in the affair. Had he not first loved us, and given his son to die for us, and then called us by his grace, and given us a heart to love him, we had continued enemies to him. This is the plain sense of the words, and is agreeable to innumerable other passages of scripture. Whereas the other sense is quite forced, and makes the words say what they do not. They are not, we love him because *we first believed* he loved us. Besides, such a sense is contrary to the whole run of scripture, and the express declaration of our Lord, who says, there is no true religion in such love. See page 55. 56. 57, of the inquiry. And it is contrary to the whole bible, in another view. According to scripture, we can have no evidence of our interest in God's special love, and pardoning mercy, until we believe and embrace the gospel; and love to God or what implies it, is the only evidence we can have that God loves us. It is therefore impossible, on good grounds, to believe God loves us with a design to save us, before we love him. We must *first* love him, before we can have the least evidence that God loves us. They therefore who believed God loved them, while they had no love to him, and have begun to love God wholly upon this belief, have believed a lie, in the face of the whole bible: And all their religion is nothing but delusion.

fixes on something infinitely more important than *self*, and his own personal interest, as the object of his regard and pursuit. He from that moment devotes himself to the glory of God, and the greatest general good, in the advancement of his kingdom. From this time he begins to pray, and say, 'Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as in heaven.' And it now becomes his study and labour, to promote this grand interest, by serving God & his generation; and thus he seeks first the kingdom of God. He whose religious discoveries, views and exercises are not of this kind, and do not issue in this, may safely conclude himself a stranger to true religion.

IF this most fundamental difference between true religion and false, was attended to by public teachers; and they laboured to keep it in view, in all their descriptions of the christian's character and exercises, and set the doctrines and precepts of the gospel in this light; it would tend to kill the false comfort and confidence of those who have a selfish religion, and undeceive them. And on the contrary, it would tend greatly to the instruction, enlargement and joy of the true friends of God, and his kingdom.

But, instead of this, how common is it to hear the preacher speak of religion, as if it consisted altogether in selfishness! To represent the hopes and fears, the joys and sorrows, and all the exercises of the christian, as wholly selfish; and treat of all the doctrines and duties of christianity in this light! How common to find arminians, neonominians, professed calvinists, antinomians, or whatever other name they may bear, & however they may differ in other things, all agreeing in this! This is to stun and starve the true christian; and feed and strengthen such as have a lie in their right hand.

THE END OF THE INQUIRY.

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MR. Hart, in his dialogues, asserted concerning the moral taste, common to all men, what was thought to be inconsistent with the total corruption of man, described in the holy scripture ; and of a very bad tendency. He was publicly told that Mr. Edwards, in his dissertation on the nature of true virtue, had considered and confuted his notion of moral taste : And it was suggested that he ought first to answer Mr. Edwards, before he advanced so much on a tenet, which, it was thought, had been sufficiently exposed. * This led Mr. Hart to read that dissertation ; and he has since published ‘ *Remarks* on it, shewing that he has given a wrong idea and definition of virtue, and is inconsistent with himself.’ The following appendix is an attempt to vindicate Mr. Edwards. The author would have been glad to be excused from this task : But since he was persuaded Mr. Edwards

* See animadversions on Mr. Hart's dialogues, p. 17.

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Edwards had given a right idea and definition of true virtue, and that it is of importance he should be vindicated, and Mr. Hart's objections answered: And what had publicly passed between him and Mr. Hart, seemed to point him out for this work, he has thought it his duty to undertake it, hoping it may be of some advantage to the cause of truth and virtue.



APPENDIX.



APPENDIX.

NUMB. I.

Containing an answer to Mr. Hart's remarks on President Edwards's dissertation concerning the nature of true virtue.

SECTION I.

Mr. Hart's objections against Mr. Edwards's making true virtue to consist primarily in benevolence, which has universal being for its primary object, considered and answered.

MR. Edwards, in his dissertation on the nature of true virtue, has said it consists *primarily* in benevolence; and that the *primary* or first object of universal benevolence is being simply considered, or being in general, agreeable to the representation in the foregoing inquiry.—To this Mr. Hart objects two things.

First, He says, that as being simply considered, or being in general, is neither God nor the creature, but an abstract idea, love to this object is not commanded; for we are commanded to love God and our neighbour only. According to Mr. Edwards, there ought to be another, and a first command to love being in general. But as we find no such command, we may be sure there is no such duty, and that holiness does not at all consist in such love. †

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Ans.

† Remarks on Edwards, p. 5, 6.

Ans. Love to being in general, is obedience to the law of God, commanding us to love God and our fellow-creatures ; for these are being in general, and comprehend the whole of being. He who does not exercise universal benevolence, does not obey the first, nor the second command : But he who loves being, as such, or simply considered, which is the same as being in general, (and 'tis evident Mr Edwards uses these terms as synonymous) I say, he who loves being in general, loves God and his fellow creatures ; and therefore obeys the two great commands.

Obj. ' This is no answer,' says Mr. H. ' According to this notion of the root, or first principle of true virtue, love to God, as well as to our neighbour, is the offspring of this general, indeterminate benevolence.' And if it is fit to command or require the daughter affection, much more the mother love. p. 6.

Ans. 1. If being in general was something distinct from God and the creature, and more than these, and not included in them, the objection would appear to have some foundation : But as the case is, it is wholly groundless. If a particular member of a community or nation, should be commanded to love the king, and all his fellow-subjects ; and he should be told, this love must be primarily, good will to all in general, and not to any individuals, exclusive of the rest ; would he have any reason to say, this was not included in the command he had received ; and that he was not by this bound to exercise this good will to the whole nation, as such : Because he was to love only the king and his fellow-subjects ? That the whole nation, simply considered as such, or the nation in general, including king and subjects, was only ' an abstract idea,' including neither king, nor his subjects ; but something else, which he must love *first* ; and then from this ' mother affection' ' the daughter love' must flow, viz. love to the king and to his fellow-subjects ?

subjects? If not, what Mr. Hart has said, is not reasonable.—

Ans. 2. It will more fully appear how frivolous this objection is, if we consider *in what sense* being in general is the primary object of true benevolence. It means no more than that true benevolence is of the nature of love to being in general. This is fundamental and original in its nature; so that it cannot, from its very nature, be limited to any particular sort or circle of beings; but for the same reason it loves one, it loves all. Therefore it regards individuals, and is exercised toward them, not in a limited, confined sense, but as part of the whole. In this view, it appears that love to God may be an affection which has being in general for its object; and its true nature, by which it is distinguished from every thing else, may consist in this; and yet there be no exercise of heart towards being in general, antecedent to love to God, of which love to God is the fruit and offspring. All that is asserted is, that this true love to God, is a disposition to love being in general; and carries this in its very nature, else it would not be true benevolence. † And where is the ground of representing love to being in general, as the ‘mother affection,’ and love to God and our neighbour as ‘the daughter love,’ when the matter is viewed in this light?

Secondly, Mr. Hart objects, that Mr. Edwards, by making being in general the primary object of holy love, sets this up as supreme, and makes an idol of it, to which the first and supreme regard is to be paid; while nothing but a secondary, subordinate, inferior affection is left for God.

Ans. When it is said that being in general is the primary or first object of benevolent love, the meaning is, that this affection in its primary quality and distinguishing nature has being in general, as such, for its object; and is a disposition to regard all, and not a part only; and

† See the preceding inquiry, p. 11, 12.

and that being in general is its *first* object, in distinction from benevolent being, which is a *secondary* object of benevolence, and the primary object of complacence. This is not only consistent with God's being the chief and supreme object of this affection; but he is so *necessarily*, as Mr. Edwards has observed and proved in his second chapter.

Mr. Edwards took care to guard against both these objections of Mr. Hart's in the following words. 'When I say, true virtue consists in love to being in general, I shall not be likely to be understood, that no one act of the mind, or exercise of love, is of the nature of true virtue, but what has being in general, or the great system of universal existence for its direct and immediate object; so that no exercise of love, or kind affection to any one particular being, that is but a small part of the whole, has any thing of the nature of true virtue: But that the *nature* of true virtue consists in a *disposition to benevolence* towards being in general.' 'My meaning is, that no affections towards particular persons or beings is of the nature of true virtue, but such as arises from a generally benevolent temper, or from that habit or frame of mind, wherein consists a disposition to love being in general.' p. 118, 119.

What can be plainer than this? According to this a person may love God supremely, with a love which has not universal existence for its direct and immediate object (only as God is in a sense universal existence) but God may be as much the first, direct, and immediate object, in all respects, as if there were no other existence; and yet this love carry in its nature, love to being, as such, or universal existence, and this be the ground and reason why it fixes on God, as the supreme object; and distinguish it from every thing which is not holy love; for if it were not a love, which in its nature is love to being in general, it would not be true, holy love to God.

But it seems Mr. Hart has understood Mr. Edwards,

as he thought he should not be likely to be understood ; and as he expressly declared he would not be understood. With how much reason and justice, the reader must judge.

Mr. Hart allows, that according to Mr. Edwards's scheme, GOD may be the primary, chief and supreme object of the love of complacence. p. 5, 8.

But let us consider whether there are not as many and great difficulties in this, as there are in making God the supreme object of benevolence to being in general. This perhaps may give us some further light in this matter.

The love of complacence has beauty, or beautiful, excellent being for its object. Holy complacence has moral beauty in general, moral beauty as such, simply considered, for its object ; and not any particular beauty or the beauty of any particular being, as confined and limited to that, and exclusive of moral beauty in general. It is exercised towards particular beautiful beings, as sharing in the beauty common to all holy beings, & is love to moral beauty in general, as such : Or, in other words, it is love of holiness, *for holiness sake*, simply considered, as being what it is, in its own nature. Therefore love to particular holy beings, has its first original and primary ground in love of holiness in general, and is really in its own nature love of holiness, as such, which distinguishes it from all affection, which is not true love of holiness.

Mr. Hart's objection against benevolence, as Mr. Edwards has represented it, may be applied to this view of complacence, in the following manner, ' According to this doctrine, there ought to have been *three* great commands. The first, greatest, and most fundamental of all, should have been thus, viz. 'Thou shalt love *holiness* in general, simply considered ; for *complacence* in this is the root and mother of all *complacential love* ; and all *holy complacence* primarily and most essentially consists in it. Secondly, subordinate to this, and as the first great branch of

of this root, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c.—† Is not this argument, in all respects, as strong and conclusive, as when used by Mr. Hart, against what Mr. Edwards has said of benevolence ?

Mr. H. will doubtless acknowledge that God may be the supreme object of the love of holiness, as he is infinitely holy, and the fountain and sum of all holiness; and that he must be so, to him who loves holiness in general, or for its own sake, simply considered : Though he might not be the supreme object of any other kind of love which has not holiness, as such, for its primary object. And why must not this be as true of the love of benevolence, as Mr. Edwards has defined it ?

Mr. H. uses the following argument to prove that God cannot be the supreme object of the benevolence Mr. Edwards describes. p. 7.

‘ Upon Mr. Edwards’s principles, the absolutely great being must have an incomparably greater share of the primary benevolence to being, simply considered, than all other particular beings. Compared with them, he has chief and supreme benevolent regard : But not so, compared with the primary object of virtuous love, viz. being in general. That must be the chief object ; for the great being does not exhaust all being, so as to reduce all others to non-existence, or no degree of being. He infinitely outweighs all other beings, as put in the scale against him. But if his infinite degree of being is put into one scale, and the same be put into the opposite scale, and together with that, the degrees of existence of all other beings, ’tis obvious this great being’s weight, in the opposite scales, will balance itself, and the whole weight of the other beings will remain clear, and turn the scale. This scale has in it the whole of the primary object of virtuous love, the other not ; and the virtuous attraction, or tendency of primary benevolence to being, simply considered, is in proportion to the quantity of being.’ Every

† See remarks, p. 5, 6.

Every one must see, at first view, that if this argument proves God cannot be the supreme object of universal benevolence, it equally proves he cannot be the supreme object of any love and regard, in which the creature has the least share : And that the heart which has any regard to the creation, cannot pay supreme regard to God. But I will now apply it to the love of complacence in particular, by substituting that in room of benevolence ; by which it will appear this argument will prove, if it proves any thing, that God cannot be the supreme object of complacence.

‘ Upon Mr. Edward’s principles, (and in the case before us, we may say, upon Mr. Hart’s too) ‘ the absolutely great being must have an incomparably greater share of the *love of holiness for holiness sake, or the love of moral beauty in general*, simply considered, than all other particular beings. Compared with them, he has the chief and supreme, *complacential love* ; but not so, compared with the primary object of holy love, viz. *holiness in general, or moral beauty, as such*. That must be the chief object ; for the great and most holy being does not exhaust all *holiness*, so as to reduce all others to *no degree of moral beauty*. His *holiness* infinitely outweighs the *holiness* of all other beings, as put in the scale against him. But if his infinite degree of *holiness*, is put into one scale, and the same be put into the opposite scale, and together with that, the *holiness* of all other holy beings, ’tis obvious this great being’s *holiness* in the opposite scales, will balance itself, and the whole weight of the *holiness* of other beings will remain clear, and turn the scale. This scale has in it the whole of the primary object of the *love of complacence*, the other not ; and the holy attraction, or tendency of primary *complacential love* to *holiness* in general, simply considered, is in proportion to the quantity of *holiness*.’—Mr. H. subjoins to this argument the following words, ‘ How do false metaphysics

physics entangle and mislead, the greatest and best men, when they wander in them! To whose metaphysics, Mr. Edwards's or Mr. Hart's, this exclamation is most properly applicable, the judicious reader, I suppose, will be at no loss. *

Mr.

* It may not be useless, perhaps, to observe here, that as being in general is the primary object of general benevolence, & benevolent being a secondary object, as has been observed; so there is a distinction to be made in the object of complacential love, into primary and secondary, in some measure analogous to that of benevolence. The primary object of complacence, is that holiness and beauty which consists in pure benevolence, and a secondary object is the holy complacence itself. It must be evident to any one who will attend, that this must be the case; for there must be complacence, before there can be any delight in complacence, or complacential love of complacence; therefore the *first* complacence cannot have complacence, or love of holiness for its object; but the *first* love of holiness must be the love of holy benevolence. And when this complacence in benevolence once exists, it does itself become an object of complacence, and in this sense is a secondary object of complacential love; it being a secondary beauty, implied in benevolence and flowing from it. And indeed, the mind cannot have any true conception of the love of holiness, or holy complacential love, until it actually takes place in the mind; and therefore the *first* exercise of it in every mind, cannot have the love of complacence for its object; but it must be the beauty of benevolence. The mind in this way getting an idea of the beauty of complacential love, immediately takes delight in it, or approves of it as an excellence, which is a secondary and consequential exercise of complacence toward this secondary object. The case seems to be plainly this. The first exercise of holiness is benevolence to being, as such; in which the heart is disposed to unite itself to being in general, in seeking the highest universal good. And this general benevolence implies in it benevolence to benevolent beings, and a disposition to love benevolence, with a love of complacence. And the benevolent mind, being thus pleased with benevolence as the greatest beauty and excellence, is of course in the next place pleased with this beautiful complacence in benevolence.

Of this holy love, in all its branches, and exercises, GOD is in a true sense the first and supreme object, as he is the sum of all being; so that all created existence, in comparison with him, sinks into nothing. And he is the sum and fountain of all benevolent being, and of complacence in moral beauty; or of all excellence and moral beauty and perfection. And his existence and relations to his creatures, in which he is infinitely distinguished from all other beings, are the ground

Mr. Edwards says 'true virtue must chiefly consist in love to God, the being of beings, infinitely the greatest and best of beings,' and that 'it may be asserted in general, that nothing is of the nature of true virtue, in which God is not the *first* and the *last*,' &c. p. 125, 134. And he thought this was evident from what he had said upon the nature of true virtue; which he has particularly proved in his second chapter. Mr. Hart says, herein 'he is very inconsistent with himself;' and that 'there is indeed a strange confusion and inconsistency in this great man's ideas and reasonings upon this subject.' p. 9, 11.

But enough has been said, to shew how groundless this charge is, and that Mr. Edwards is perfectly consistent in this matter; and I trust that whoever will consider the subject with proper attention and candor, will find it the only consistent notion of true virtue, that has ever been proposed; and that can be supported by scripture. This, I hope, has been made evident in the preceding inquiry.

It may not be improper to take notice here, of the objection Mr. H. makes against Mr. Edwards's speaking of any affection to God, under the name of BENEVOLENCE. He presents us with an extract of a letter from one, who, he says, is 'an ingenious gentleman:' In which Mr. Edwards is severely censured for using this word thus. He says this is 'more than odd; it is quite improper, and sounds irreverent!' p. 10. margin.

Mr. Edwards has taken particular notice of this objection, and answered it, p. 126, 127. Mr. Hart, or his friend, had no right to renew this very objection against

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Mr.

ground of peculiar exercises of the benevolent mind towards him: such as holy fear and reverence; a humble trust and rest and joy in him, as the supreme good, & a sweet acquiescence in him, & in his government and works, and resignation to him &c all which is implied in benevolence, even in its very nature; and is nothing but universal benevolence acting according to its nature, towards this infinitely great and glorious object.

Mr. Edwards, without taking notice of his answer, and shewing wherein his reasoning fails; which neither of them have attempted:

I trust none will deny that any affection exercised towards God has the nature of good will to him; but if we are to exercise any good will towards God, and be in any degree his friends, we must so far exercise benevolence towards him; for *good will* and *benevolence* are two names of the same thing. And why, of these two names, which are used for precisely the same thing, one should be 'improper and irreverent,' when used to express this same affection towards God, and the other not, remains for this *ingenious gentleman* to shew. Why this same affection may not be called by the same name, when exercised towards a superior, and one that is above all dependence on us, as well as when exercised towards an inferior and dependent, no man, I believe, can shew. If benevolence implies indigence, and dependence in the object towards which it is exercised, it would indeed be improper and irreverent, to call any affection exercised towards God by this name. And I conclude this gentleman, and all others who make this objection, have affixed this idea to the word benevolence; and that this is the ground of their disgust. But in this they are very arbitrary; in affixing a meaning to the word which it does not express, nor was ever designed to signify.

Mr. H. allows that God is the first object of his own benevolence, p. 18. If God exercises benevolence towards himself, why may not his creatures? Yea, why *must* they not? In the exercise of holiness they imitate God as dear children, and are partakers of the divine nature. Their love to God then must be of the same nature with God's love of himself, and if his is a love of benevolence, theirs must be so too. And why God's love of himself may be called benevolence, which Mr. H. ventures to do, and yet the same kind of love of God in the creature may not be called so, is quite unaccountable.

Besides,

Besides, Mr. H. makes all virtue summarily to consist in 'giving up all inconsistent interests, as loss for God's sake, & his kingdom's.' p. 33. Now, what is this but benevolence or good will to God, & his interest & kingdom, in such a regard for his honor and interest, as to be willing to give up every thing for the sake of this? If this is not benevolence, of which God is the first and chief object, we may despair of ever knowing what is benevolence.

But Mr. H. is more express yet. He says, a '*benevolent* propensity of minds to minds, is communicated to the hearts of men, by a sight and feeling sense of God's *benevolence* to them,' in the exercise of which they attract to him in the first place, &c. p. 23, 24. Surely Mr. H. falls under the 'just' reproof of this 'ingenious gentleman,' if any one does.



S E C T I O N II.

Mr. Hart's objections against Mr. Edwards's notion of the secondary or natural beauty in virtue, considered and obviated.

MR. Edwards observes, there are two kinds of beauty. One is *moral beauty*, or the beauty of true virtue or holiness; which is the highest kind of beauty, and consists in cordial agreement and harmony, or general benevolence; and is discerned and approved of, by such only, who love true holiness; which love is itself the exercise of holiness. The other is *natural beauty*, which consists in natural harmony or agreement, &c. and takes place in the natural and material world, in numberless instances. And this same kind of beauty is found in things immaterial and mental, as well as in other things; and there is a natural beauty in virtuous exercises

ses of the mind, and the fruit of those exercises, which is entirely distinct from the moral, holy beauty, and of a different nature ; even the same kind of beauty which is found in the material world. Thus there is a natural beauty, harmony & agreement, in a man's doing to others as he would think proper they should do to him, of the same kind with the beauty and harmony of a building, the different parts of which are harmoniously fitted to answer each other. Which beauty is distinct from that general benevolence, in which the truth of a man's doing to others as he would they should do to him consists, and which is the true moral beauty of the heart. This *natural beauty* is found in all virtuous exercises and conduct, especially in relative duties between man and man, according to their different stations & relations ; which may be relished and delighted in by those who have no virtue, as a taste for this natural beauty, is natural to all men, and does not imply disinterested benevolence, but is consistent with the highest degree of selfishness and sin. Therefore they have run into a great mistake, who have thought this relish for natural beauty, which is found in virtuous conduct, which is common to all men, an evidence that all men have a degree of true virtue. [See Edwards's nature of true virtue, chap. III d. throughout.]

Mr. Hart objects against all this, as 'very injurious and destructive to true virtue.' And in order to expose it, he makes the following observations, chap. III d.

'1. If this doctrine is true, God's revealed law,—no where commands, recommends, or once mentions that in which all true virtue primarily and most essentially consists ; but only enjoins and commands it in regard to its secondary beauty.' p. 16.

Ans. The law of God requires universal goodness or love, and nothing else ; in which Mr. Edwards says all true virtue consists. This is sufficiently illustrated in the preceding inquiry ; from which it appears this argument is very ill chosen indeed, to be used against Mr. Edwards's

Edwards's notion of virtue; and is nothing but begging the question. Mr. H. says, 'If I mistake not, Mr. Edwards does implicitly acknowledge this in what has been transcribed above.' *Ans.* he is doubtless *greatly mistaken*, and must lie under this imputation, till he has particularly shewn where and how this is implied in what Mr. Edwards has said. Mr. H. goes on,

'2. If this doctrine is true, it may be suspected that the holy men of old, prophets and apostles, never knew or practised true virtue.'

Ans. Our Lord has told us that love to God and our neighbour is the whole of what the law and the prophets inculcated; even that same universal benevolence in which Mr. Edwards says all true virtue consists. We have therefore no more reason to *suspect* the prophets never knew or practised this virtue, than we have to suspect that Christ was not a teacher come from God. And one of the chief apostles said, 'love is the fulfilling of the law;' and that all true religion and holiness consists in this, and nothing else, 1 Cor. xiii. 2. He is therefore so far from placing virtue in this *secondary beauty*, that he expressly places it in something else, even in universal love and benevolence.

The instances in scripture Mr. H. brings to support this observation, are not to his purpose, Plal. 18, 25, 26. Rev. 16. 5, 6. There is a true moral beauty in the righteousness of God here celebrated, which consists in universal benevolence. Take this from that conduct which is called righteousness in God or man, and no moral goodness remains; so nothing worthy of holy admiration and praise. There being a secondary beauty, a natural fitness, in justice, does not prove, or suppose, there is no higher beauty and excellence in it. If Mr. H. would prove the point he has set up here, he must produce an instance of virtue, recommended and celebrated, as such, which has nothing in it of the nature of universal benevolence. In what he has yet said, he has only begged the question. He proceeds,

'3. Let

‘ 3. Let it be observed that there is no such object of God’s attention and regard, as being *simply considered*.’
p. 18.

Ans. There is such an object as being in general, or universal being, which is the same with *being simply considered*, as Mr. Edwards uses the terms. And universal benevolence has this for its object ; & that is not virtuous love which will not extend to being in general, as such, or simply considered. This has been sufficiently explained and evinced by Mr. Edwards, p. 129, 130, 131. and in the preceding inquiry, p. 11, 12.

Mr. H. to support his assertion, goes on to say, ‘ God is his own first object. He sees himself as he is, as possessed of an absolute fulness of being, enriched and adorned with all possible mental perfections. *As such*, he is the primary object of his *first* and chief love, both of benevolence and complacency.’

On this passage I would observe,

1. It is granted that ‘ God is his own first object.’ This Mr. Edwards grants, and has proved : And it has been shewn in the foregoing section, that this is consistent with virtue’s consisting in love to being in general ; not only as God is, in effect, being in general ; but his love of himself is, in its nature, love to being, as such, or being simply considered.

2. According to Mr. H’s account of the matter here, God’s love of benevolence and complacency, is no part of his excellence and perfections. God is ‘ enriched and adorned with ALL POSSIBLE mental perfections,’ independent of his love ; and as thus possessed of *all possible* perfections, ‘ he is the primary object of his *first* love.’ This is a bold stroke indeed ! It strikes out all love of benevolence or complacency from being any part of holiness. The scripture says, ‘ God is love ;’ but according to Mr. H. no part of his perfection is expressed in this, nor any thing worthy or excellent. And the law of God, which requires love, is no transcript or expression of the divine perfections ;

perfections ; for these do not consist, in the least degree, in love, but in something entirely different from this. And if God's love to himself is no part of 'all possible perfection,' he having all possible perfection antecedent to this ; then his love of benevolence and complacence towards his creatures is no part of his holiness and perfection. And it will also follow, that love of benevolence and complacence in creatures, the angels for instance, is no part of their moral excellence. Thus we see where Mr. H. is carried in his opposition to Mr. Edwards's account of true virtue. This was no inadvertence in Mr. H. No one can do better than he has done on this head, if he sets up to oppose general benevolence to being, as such, as the foundation and sum of all holiness : It will necessarily land him in this first-born of absurdities, and he can give no better account of the divine holiness and perfections than Mr. H. has here given. M. H. has the same sentiment, in the following extraordinary sentence, p. 12. 'He [God] is not virtuous and holy *because* he loves himself ; 'but he loves himself *because he is holy.*' That is, God's holiness does not consist in love, but something which is antecedent to all love, and the ground and object of it ; and is therefore quite a distinct thing from love.

Mr. H. may be asked, what this holiness is, and wherein it consists ? What are 'all possible mental perfections,' in which there is no degree, no kind of love ? Doubtless he will be as much puzzled for an answer, as the Indian he mentions, who asserted the earth stood on a tortoise ; and being asked what the tortoise stood upon ? 'He cried out, with surprise, *Me don't know !*' p. 23.

Perhaps Mr. H. thinks he has answered this question, in his chap. of the essential nature of true virtue. but if I can understand him there, what he says of the divine holiness and perfection is in direct opposition to this extraordinary assertion, and very consistent with Mr. Edwards. He represents God's holiness as consisting in *an equitable regard to himself, and his creatures.* This may be benevolence

lence to being in general, notwithstanding any thing he says. Yea, I think it must be this, according to his own account of the matter, when all he says upon it is put together. He speaks of 'an established virtuousness of character' in the creature, as conformity to God himself; and he says this consists in love; p. 43. and that it is in effect *universal love*. p. 47. Now what can universal love be, but love to being in general? And if this is virtue in the creature, by which he is conformed to God's moral character, then God's holiness consists in this same *universal love*, or love to being in general. But, be this as it may, it is certain Mr. H. makes the holiness of God to consist in part, if not wholly, in *love*. What can God's equitable regard to himself be, but love to himself? Let him tell who can.

Moreover, he speaks of the love & goodness of God, as a 'most virtuous' [or holy] propensity; p. 43. and as that which is *his glory*. p. 44, 45. Now, if God's love, his benevolence and goodness, are his holiness, and his glory, how can it be that he is 'enriched and adorned with *all possible* mental perfections,' antecedent to his love to himself, & as the ground of it; and antecedent to his love to his creatures? This love cannot be any part of his perfection, holiness and glory, if he is 'adorned with *all possible perfections*' antecedent to it. Thus we see Mr. Hart has been so far from telling us what *all possible perfection* is, considered as aside from love, and the ground and object of it, that he has contradicted this his position, and placed the moral perfection and holiness of God in love, and nothing else. 'Error is fated to run crooked!'

Mr. H. proceeds to say, p. 19.

- '4. Let us next consider the destructive influence of this notion of virtue, upon virtue itself. All relative duties which we owe to God, to Jesus Christ, and our fellow-servants,——partake of the nature of justice: They are equitable, fit and right in their own nature: They have a natural agreement and harmonious proportionableness

tionableness to the nature and characters of their respective objects.—All this you see and approve, and the dispositions and exercises of your mind or heart towards all these relative duties, are natural, harmoniously proportionable to them, and in concord with them, equitably suited to them. Your heart then is very beautiful, but not at all virtuous, if these harmonious and equitable dispositions and exercises of your mind do not arise from pure benevolence to being, simply considered. So then the beauty of your mind, as adorned with all these relative, equitable and harmonious dispositions *only*, is of the same sort with that of bodies. Your heart is as beautiful as a square or a cube, and no more virtuous than they.

On this the following things may be observed,
1. There is, in things of a moral nature, a natural beauty, which consists in harmony and agreement, &c. which is distinct from any thing properly moral in them; and therefore a beauty which is distinct from moral beauty, and of a different nature. This Mr. Edwards has asserted, illustrated and proved: And I do not find that Mr. Hart has so much as attempted to shew wherein his proof fails, and how what he says is not to the purpose. All Mr. H. attempts to do, is to draw absurd consequences from this notion of secondary, natural beauty in moral things; which consist in begging the question, or assertions without any manner of proof. Some of which have been considered; or in misrepresenting Mr. Edwards' doctrine on this head: Of which the words before us are an instance, as I shall shew before I have done.

There is a uniformity and proportion and an answerableness of one thing to another, in moral things or true virtue, which is of the same kind with the uniformity, &c. which takes place in the material world, and the same taste which discerns and takes pleasure in the latter, will do the same with respect to the former. And therefore this taste and pleasure don't imply love of virtue; for it

is not the virtue itself that is discerned and relished ; and if there was nothing there but what is discerned and relished by this taste, there would be no virtue in it. This is what Mr. Edwards has asserted, and Mr. H. has said nothing to prove it is not so : Nor will he ever do it, it is presumed. It is a truth which every considerate, judicious person must discern ; Mr. H. himself not excepted ; for *he* has acknowledged it, as I shall shew presently.

A person wholly selfish may be pleased with some things which attend general benevolence ; there is to him a beauty in it, so far as he has advantage by it. This may be while he sees nothing of the true beauty of benevolence. Saul, under the influence of selfishness, saw a beauty in David's conduct, in sparing his life when he was in his hands, and was highly delighted with it, while he wholly overlooked the true beauty of it, and the virtue he exercised, and had no pleasure in it, but would have been displeased with the same conduct in David, had it been towards one of Saul's enemies. It is granted that in this case, the beauty seen, and Saul's pleasure in David's conduct, are not wholly of the same kind with that under consideration, as the former has its foundation chiefly in selfishness, the latter not ; yet, I think it serves to illustrate the case before us, and shew that men may see a beauty in virtuous conduct, and be pleased with it ; and yet not see the true beauty of virtue, or have any regard to the true virtue which is exercised ; but be disposed to be displeased with that, and hate it.

The just proportion and symmetry of a beautiful picture is adjusted and marked out by a number of exactly proportioned lines, drawn so as in a certain manner to agree with each other, and form a proper uniformity. Now these lines, thus exactly drawn and proportioned, form a beauty different from that which we call the beauty of a picture, or a human face, which consists in a certain symmetry and just proportion. An accurate mathematician,
who

who has no taste or discerning of what is meant by the beauty of a picture, which is formed by certain colours and shades, proportioned to these lines; yet might discern the just proportion of these lines, exactly drawn to suit and answer each other, see a beauty in it, and be pleased. Here we see there are two distinct beauties, the one inferior, the other higher, the latter the true beauty of a picture; and yet the former is discerned, and not the latter. And why may it not be so in the case before us; tho' the beauties, one of an inferior, the other of a higher kind, have a different and greater distinction, than in this instance? The exact proportion and harmony in the vibrations of the chords of a musical instrument, have a beauty in them that would give pleasure, if clearly discerned, distinct from the harmony of a tune; and he who has no taste for music, might discern the harmony and exact proportion of these vibrations, and be pleased with this beauty.

Mr. H. insists upon it, that what Mr. Edwards calls the secondary beauty that attends true virtue, & says is the same kind with natural beauty, is true virtue, and all the beauty there is in it. This seems to be at the bottom of all he has said against Mr. Edwards on this head. He might, so far as I can see, with just as much reason say, all the beauty of a beautiful picture consists in the exact proportion of a number of lines: Or that the whole of the beauty and sweet harmony of music, consists in the exact, harmonious, correspondent vibrations of the air, or of the chords of a musical instrument. He says, 'The truth is, this marvellous scheme has changed the natural, moral beauty and glory of true virtue, into an image made like to the beauty of an equilateral triangle, or a chess-board.' p. 21.

That he had no reason to bring this charge against Mr. Edwards, any one must see at first glance. Mr. Edwards says virtue does not consist in this secondary beauty; but in something else of quite a different nature and kind; that though there is a beauty which consists in proportions;

proportion, and the answerableness of one thing with another, that attends true virtue, which is of the same kind with the proportion and beauty of a triangle or chess-board ; yet this is of a nature entirely different from virtue, and has nothing of its beauty and glory. What more could Mr. Edwards have done utterly to exclude the beauty of a chess-board, &c. from the beauty and glory of true virtue ? This was the design of this chapter on secondary beauty. But may not this charge, with great justice and propriety, be retorted on Mr. Hart himself ? he insists upon it, that this secondary beauty, which Mr. Edwards has proved to be like to the beauty of material things (and Mr. H. has not shewn that it is not so) is all the beauty and glory there is in true virtue. This charge must lie upon him till he can prove the beauty attending true virtue, which Mr. Edwards calls natural, secondary beauty, is not a beauty of the same kind with the beauty in material things. This leads me to another observation.

2. There is a misrepresentation in this passage. Mr. H. here supposes that all relative duties to God, to Jesus Christ, &c. may be practised from the heart, according to Mr. Edwards, without the exercise of true virtue ; ‘ and
‘ the dispositions and exercises of the mind or heart to-
‘ wards all the objects of these relative duties be natural,
‘ harmoniously proportionable to them, & in concord with
‘ them, equitably suited to them,’ and *the heart* be thus
‘ very beautiful ; but not at all virtuous.’ This is a gross misrepresentation. Mr. Edwards speaks of this secondary beauty as the attendant of true virtue, which does not take place in the mind that is destitute of virtue. He allows of no dispositions and exercises of heart, harmoniously proportionable and equitably suitable to the objects of relative duties, in the mind destitute of true virtue, or general benevolence, and which are not the exercises of that. And in this misrepresentation Mr. H. really begs the question in dispute, or takes for granted what he

he had to prove, viz. that a man may *heartily* practice all relative duties towards God and his neighbour, while he has no universal benevolence. If he had proved this, which he has taken for granted, and Mr. Edwards had allowed what he supposes, viz. that the mind may have all the beauty which he supposes in relative duties, without any true virtue, 'the destructive influence of his notion of virtue, upon virtue itself,' might have appeared. But as the case stands, nothing of this kind is made to appear.

Mr. H. goes into the same way of arguing (if it can be called arguing) in another passage which I will transcribe. After having made a quotation from Mr. Edwards, in which he supposes, what he had abundantly proved, viz. that there is a natural beauty accompanying true virtue, in which true virtue does not consist, but is of the same kind with the natural beauty in material things, he cries out, 'Wonderful!' And then goes on in the following words, 'Here an appeal is made to experience, and the argument is built on this supposition, that moral proportion and harmony is a beauty of the same kind with that of material things.' Here is a misrepresentation. Mr. Edwards does not assert this of '*moral proportion and harmony*,' but says that besides the moral proportion and harmony in true virtue, there is also a *natural* proportion and harmony, which is the attendant of true virtue, in which there is a *natural* beauty of the same kind with that of material things. And Mr. H. has said nothing to disprove it, that I can find. And surely Mr. Edwards had a right to build an argument on a premise which he thought he had fully proved; and which, it seems, Mr. H. did not think best directly, and expressly to attempt to disprove, or so much as deny. But Mr. H. goes on. 'It is not possible to conceive of any thing more absurd. I desire any one to take a human mind, adorned with all right, relative affections and exercises to Jesus Christ, harmoniously agreeable,

agreeable, and beautifully proportioned to his characters and relations to us (only excluding benevolence to being, simply considered; and let the faith of him be their spring) and carefully compare it with a square, a cube, and a beautiful piece of embroidery, and try if he can discover any such likeness in their beauties as to lead him to pronounce them beauties of the very same sort or order. He will as soon discover the actions of a spirit to be of the same kind with the action or motions of a clock.*

Here Mr. H. supposes what is impossible, viz. that a mind may be adorned with all right, relative affections and exercises to Jesus Christ,* &c. when benevolence to being in general is excluded; and that a man is a true believer in Christ while wholly without this benevolence. He has attempted to form a character here that never existed, and never will, because it implies a contradiction. Therefore there is no such character to be considered. Mr. H. here introduces the beauties of true virtue, and then asks if there is any likeness between *these*, and the beauty of a square, &c. Mr. Edwards does not say these are beauties of the same sort. What he says is, that over and above the true virtuous beauty in these relative duties, there is also a beauty of another kind, which itself is not virtue; but only the attendant of it, and is of the same kind with the beauty in material things, and may be perceived and delighted in by one who has no virtue, nor any relish for it. Now, Mr. H. has not offered the least evidence that this is not so, in this passage; nor has he said any thing really in opposition to Mr. Edwards.*

But I proceed to observe,

3. Mr. H. after all he has said to the contrary, allows

* Mr. Edwards allows there is a natural beauty in the practice of justice, and other virtues, in *external conduct*. And when these are the expression of the heart, there is a *moral beauty* in the exercises of that, the beauty of holiness. But when there is no true virtue in the heart, there is no natural beauty in the exercises of the mind; all the natural beauty is in the external conduct.

allows the very thing he here opposes; so opposes himself only, while he thinks he is opposing Mr. Edwards. He says, men who are destitute of true virtue, 'are many times determined to do particular equitable actions to others from a regard to the equity of the case, as their true spring, and for equity's sake, &c.' That a man in dealing with his neighbour, may 'see what is right between them, and from a regard to the equity of the case, deal justly with him.' p. 50. Here he allows that equitable conduct in relative duty may be approved and practised, and yet there be no virtue in it. I would ask Mr. H. whether there is not a sort of beauty in this justice and equitable conduct, in which there is no virtue? He must answer in the affirmative; for what he says implies it, as he supposes it is practised from a regard to the justice and equity of the case, and for equity's sake. The next question is, whether this beauty is the beauty of true virtue, or a beauty of another kind? This he has also answered. It cannot be the beauty of true virtue; for he expressly says there is no true virtue in it. And if there is a beauty in *one instance* of equitable conduct, which is of a different kind from the true beauty of virtue, this may be the case, yea certainly must be, in *all instances*. And this is a *secondary beauty*, which consists in a natural harmony and agreement of one thing with another; the very same beauty which is found in material things. Thus Mr. Hart allows all that Mr. Edwards has asserted concerning secondary beauty, and expressly asserts at the latter end of his book, what he greatly condemns in Mr. Edwards towards the beginning. 'Error is fated to run crooked. The *greatest men* can't govern, and keep it straight.' Mr. Hart, p. 28. Mr. Edwards having observed that it was evident, from what he has said, that the 'disposition or sense of the mind which consists in a determination of mind to approve and be pleased with this (secondary) beauty, considered simply, and by itself, has nothing of the nature of true

true virtue, and is entirely a different thing from a truly virtuous taste ;' there being no more virtue in it than there is in ' a disposition to approve the harmony of good music,' &c. Mr H. makes the following observation upon it. ' If this good man had attended to one obvious distinction, he might have saved himself from falling into ' this *grand absurdity*, viz. The difference there is in the ' nature of things, between the mind's seeing and approving the harmonious proportion and justness of virtuous ' dispositions and exercises of heart, towards God and our ' neighbour, and having such dispositions and exercises ' himself. A man may see and approve the beauty ' and excellence of true virtue, *in some degree*, and yet ' his heart not be in this beautifully harmonious and equitable temper and state.' p. 20. 21.

Ans. I. ' This good man' has attended to this distinction, and thought he had demonstrated the ' grand ' absurdity' and impossibility of what is supposed in it, in the following words. ' It is impossible that any one ' should truly *relish* this beauty, consisting in general benevolence, who has not that temper himself. I have ' observed, that if any being is possessed of such a temper, he will unavoidably be pleased with the same temper in another. And it may be in like manner demonstrated, that 'tis such a spirit, and nothing else, that ' will relish such a spirit. For if a being, destitute of ' benevolence, should love benevolence to being in general, it would prize and seek that which it had no value ' for. Because to love an inclination to the good of being in general, would imply a loving and prizing the ' good of being in general. For how should one love and ' value a disposition to a thing, or a tendency to promote ' a thing, and for that very reason, because it tends to ' promote it, when the thing itself is what he is regardless of, and has no value for, nor desires to have it promoted.' p. 125.

Had Mr. H. well attended to this passage, and determined

mined to say nothing contrary to it, till he could answer it, 'he might have saved himself from falling into the *grand absurdity*' contained in the words just quoted from him. For,—

ANS. 2. Nothing can be more absurd, and imply a greater contradiction, than that which Mr. H. here affirms, viz. that the heart which is in no degree virtuous, does at the same time approve of virtue; and that there is a difference in the nature of things between these. Heartily to approve of virtue for its own sake, is to be at heart a friend to virtue, and to love holiness for holiness sake; and can this take place in an unholy heart? A heart that is an enemy to all virtue? It is impossible. It is even a self-evident proposition, *that the love of holiness, is holiness*; and therefore has passed for an incontestible truth, till Mr. H. has risen and contradicted it. He says, 'a man may see and *approve* the beauty and excellence of virtue, *in some degree*, and yet his heart not be in this beautifully harmonious and equitable temper and state.' But why does he limit this to *some degree*? Why may he not *approve* of the beauty and excellence of virtue *in every degree*, as well as *in some degree*? It is impossible for him, or any one else to tell, unless it be because his heart is *in some degree* a friend to virtue, i. e. really virtuous; but not so in every degree. All Mr. H's proof of this extraordinary assertion, is in the following words. 'Nothing is more common, and nothing more to be lamented, than this monstrous inconsistency between the moral sense or taste of the mind, and the *ruling* dispositions and exercises of the heart of man.' Here is an appeal made to experience; but the whole evidence of the thing to be proved, lies in Mr. H's confident assertion. I may say, in my turn, If Mr. H. had attended to one obvious distinction, he might have saved himself from falling into this *grand absurdity*, viz. the difference there is, in the nature of things, between the dictates of the judgment and conscience, and the relish and approbation of

the heart. An inconsistency between *these* is indeed very common ; men often love and practice that which their whole hearts, which their reason and judgment declare to be wrong and hateful ; and their conscience pronounces that to be beautiful and excellent, which their hearts do not in any degree approve ; but utterly detest and hate. Here is an inconsistency between the judgment and the heart, which is consistent with the nature of things, and evident from abundant experience : But for the heart to approve of that which at the same time it hates and wholly rejects, is indeed a *monstrous inconsistency*. It implies the most palpable contradiction ; and therefore never did take place, nor ever will, in any one instance. To see beauty, and heartily approve of it, as such, or to taste and relish the beauty of holiness, as such, is the same with the love of holiness, as such, or for its own sake. And when Mr. H. will prove that the heart of man may be thus friendly to holiness, and love it for its own sake, while destitute of all true virtue, he will shew that he has not fallen into the grand absurdity with which he is charged.

Mr. H. says, that according to Mr. E. ‘ the nature and character, or perfections of God, are *no cause or ground* of the first existence of a virtuous or holy principle in the hearts of created, intelligent beings.’ And adds, ‘ I should be glad to know how the general attraction or propensity of mind to being, comes into existence.’ p. 22, marg.

Ans. It comes into existence by the omnipotent energy of God. It is his workmanship, by which men are *created* in Christ Jesus unto good works, who first *created* man in his own image. Gen. 1. 27. Eph. 10. 4. 24. God gives them a new heart ; a heart to know him, &c. Jer. 24. 7. Ezek. 36. 26. Giving a heart to know God, must be a work of power, in order to their knowing him ; and therefore cannot be effected by the knowledge of him, or a true sight of the perfections of God.

A sight and knowledge of the divine perfections cannot be the *cause* or *ground* of that which is done in order to this knowledge taking place, or in giving a heart thus to know God. It is the new heart, the circumcised, benevolent heart, and not the old, uncircumcised, selfish heart, that sees the divine character, and loves it. It is granted the heart would not see and love, were there nothing to be seen and loved; and in this sense the character seen and loved, is the ground and cause, *sine qua non*; as without this there would be no object of love. But the efficient cause, ground and foundation of all, is the divine power and energy, circumcising the heart to know and love; giving a new heart, or the spirit of God taking possession of the heart, as a powerful principle of benevolence. And in this way, even by the immediate exertion of divine, new-creating power, the heart becomes benevolent.

Mr. H's representation supposes divine power and energy to be the cause of all virtue in the creature, and that it owes its first existence to this; and so has really answered the question which he puts. He supposes 'a realizing belief' of the divine character and love, by which God's excellence and love is 'perceived, realized and *felt*, as extended to them,' is given to them by God: Or that 'tis God who 'gives them to *feel* in themselves his attracting love,' &c. and that this is the cause, ground and reason, why one sees, realizes and *feels* this excellence & love of God, rather than another, & why he does it now, rather than before. p. 23, 24. This realizing belief, sensibility, & *feeling* is given by God, in taking away the heart of stone, which would not realize and *feel* this excellence and love, and giving a new heart, a heart of flesh. This then is the cause, ground and source of the first existence of all true virtue, and must be so, according to Mr. H. And I conclude Mr. H. will not say, this divine operation, by which it is given to men to see and feel God's excellence and love, is by the truth seen; because this would

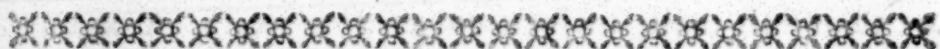
would be to make the effect the means and cause of itself, and to suppose God works by that which is the fruit and consequence of his own operation. Surely that which God does, in order to make men see and feel, is not done by their seeing and feeling, or by the things seen and felt; but by an immediate operation. If Mr. H. will not grant this, he will find himself in the case of his before-mentioned Indian.

Mr. H. says, ' This doctrine of Mr. Edwards's seems to be the foundation on which several doctrines, in the new scheme of divinity, are built. These in particular, viz. That the moral perfections and character of God, as revealed by the gospel, and seen by natural men, under the teaching of the word and spirit of Jesus Christ, so far as they are capable of seeing them, can have no possible influence in changing their hearts. Regeneration consists in giving or planting in the heart a new, spiritual taste or relish. This change is not wrought by the instrumentality of light, or by any means whatsoever; the word of God is not a means, in the hand of the spirit, in working this change; but it is effected by meer, absolute, and properly creating power, &c.'

Mr. Hart has not mentioned these doctrines exactly in the words of those to whom he imputes them; and when they have used any of these words, they have explained them, and guarded against a wrong sense, which the reader will be in danger of putting upon them, as they are here used by Mr. H. The sum of the doctrines that have been advanced on this head, so far as I can learn, is this, viz. that the human heart is naturally so wholly corrupt, so blind and opposite to the beauty and excellence of divine truth and holiness, that in order to its seeing and relishing this, a divine power must be exerted on the heart, of which divine power and operation, this sight and relish of truth is the effect. The divine operation in this case is as much antecedent to this sight and taste, as the opening the eyes is antecedent to seeing; and as much the effect

effect and consequence of this work, as seeing is the effect and consequence of having the eyes opened : Therefore light, or the truth seen, is not any means of that powerful operation, which is antecedent to seeing the truth, and does produce this light, as the cause of it : For, by the supposition, it is the effect, and not the cause ; and divine truth seen and relished, is really that in which the active change consists, which is the effect of the divine power.

Mr. H. grants this is all true, if Mr. Edwards's notion of true virtue is right : So that, according to him (and I suppose it is the truth of the case) the dispute is, at bottom, about the nature of true holiness, which is the same with the nature of God's moral character. If this is rightly stated in the preceeding inquiry, what Mr. H. calls 'the new scheme of divinity,' is as old as the bible, and the only scriptural one : If not, his opposition may perhaps be justified.



S E C T I O N III.

Mr. Hart's objections against Mr. Edwards's account of natural conscience, and moral sense, considered and answered.

MR. Hart's objections against Mr. Edwards's description of natural conscience and moral sense, are grounded on his excluding from it all relish and approbation of heart, of the beauty and excellence of virtue ; and all true sense & discerning of that in which it consists. He has formed his observations upon this under *five* particulars. p. 29—39. But the whole of the objections he makes against it, may be reduced to the three following.

- I. If natural conscience does not see and relish true virtue,

rue, or that very beauty and excellence in which it is distinguished from every thing else, then the dictates of conscience, and the sense of desert which is implied in it, are without foundation, and wrong, and it ' unavoidably ' deceives us ; for moral desert is necessarily connected ' with, and has a natural and direct relation to, this quality in moral actions, wherein their virtuousness or viciousness consists, and to nothing else. But (according to ' Mr. Edwards) natural conscience has no perception or ' sense of that quality in moral actions, wherein their virtuousness essentially consists ; but, as a wrong-headed ' thing, places it in that wherein it does not at all consist, ' and so connects the sense of desert wrong, and contrary ' to the true nature of things.' p. 30, 31.

Ans. There is in natural conscience the exercise of reason and judgment, which may be right, and agreeable to the truth, independent of the exercises of the heart, and in direct opposition to them. Reason and judgment may pronounce a thing right, morally good and excellent, while to the relish and inclination of the heart, it is utterly ineligible and displeasing. In this case, conscience is not a wrong-headed thing, but dictates the truth. Reason and judgment being rightly informed, and free from speculative error, are so far from deceiving us, that, by the supposition, they dictate nothing but the truth, and place virtue and vice, and moral desert, in that in which they truly consist. There is so much evidence of this from fact and experience, that I suppose it needless to attempt to make it more evident by reasoning upon it.

It will be said, this does not remove the difficulty ; for these dictates of reason suppose an idea of the thing, of which it judges, and that it is seen in a true light. How can the mind judge of that, of which it has no true sight or conception ? It judges of what it sees, and not of that which it does not see.

Ans. The reason & judgment may be convinced of the beauty, excellence & worthiness of an object, of which beauty

ty and excellence the mind has not the least taste & relish; & in this sense there is no idea or sight of the beauty and excellence of the object. This is certain from fact and experience, as has been just observed. And this is all that is affirmed in the case before us; and therefore the thing that is objected against. Consequently the objection must be groundless. The taste and sense of the natural beauty which there is in true virtue, and a desire to be self consistent, and opposition to the contrary (both which Mr. Edwards observes come into natural conscience, and the moral sense) may be necessary to give an idea and sense of any thing moral, and of moral desert; and yet the judgment and conscience place true virtue and moral desert, in that in which it really consists. Reason may dictate that the beauty which the mind discerns and relishes, is not the true beauty of virtue; but this is something of a more noble kind, consisting in union of heart to heart, in universal benevolence; and that all moral desert lies in this, and its contrary. I say, reason and conscience may dictate all this, without any actual idea, or real perception of that sweet beauty and excellence there is in virtue, or the least degree of relish of it: And will do so, if all speculative error is removed. Thus natural conscience, when duly enlightened, will approve of true virtue, and nothing else, as really excellent and praise worthy. And if a man does not judge right in this case; but is deceived, and judges that true virtue consists in that natural agreement and secondary beauty, which he sees and relishes, 'tis his own fault, and an abuse of his reason, through the prejudices and corruption of his heart. Mr. H. says, according to Mr. Edwards's notion of virtue, 'natural conscience is wholly ignorant of it, and uninterested in it.' But herein he is greatly mistaken. The reason and judgment may be fully convinced that true virtue consists in benevolence, while the heart is wholly opposed to it, and the moral taste have no relish for it, no sense of its sweetness, beauty and excellence. So a man's conscience

conscience may be convinced that he is wholly without all true virtue, and all proper idea and sense of it; and that he is wholly to blame for not exercising this virtue.

A man who never felt in his heart the least degree of love to God, or had any delight in worshipping him; but the greatest aversion to it, & is always most uneasy when obliged to be present where he is worshipped: But has the highest relish for gaming, drinking, and profaneness, and places all his happiness in these: Such a man may be convinced in his conscience, that there is such a thing as true supreme love to God, and that there is the highest and most refined pleasure in this, and in worshipping and serving God, with such love: That he is under all imaginable obligations to love God, and delight in him and his service, so that 'tis wholly his fault that he does not: And yet go on in his old way, with as strong an inclination as ever. In this case, the man, by the supposition, has no true idea of that about which he reasons right; but is wholly ignorant of the beauty and excellence of God, and has not the least taste and relish of the pleasure in worshipping him with true devotion. He has indeed speculative ideas of these, i. e. all the ideas that speculation, by the help of all the sensations he has, will give, or is capable of, while his heart is wholly without any taste and relish for moral excellence. In this instance (and there are many such) his conscience does not deceive him, but judges right, and his reason condemns what his heart relishes and approves. and pronounces that right, excellent and happy, of which he has not the least taste or relish; and so no true idea of the beauty, excellence and happiness of what his conscience approves, or his reason judges to be right and excellent.

The man who has no disinterested benevolence, may have a speculative idea of it, i. e. all the idea that there is, or can be, in meer speculation, and all that is necessary in order to *reason* about it; but can have nothing of that idea which comes by taste and relish of the thing, and im-

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plies a sight and sense of its true beauty and excellence. All the blindness and ignorance there is in this case, lies wholly in the want of such a taste and relish, and in an inclination to that which is opposite to it. The natural moral taste, which does not reach to true virtue, or imply the least relish for it, but is consistent with the greatest disrelish of it, is necessary in order to the mind's forming an idea of any thing moral; and therefore is implied in natural conscience and sense of moral desert; but is entirely a different thing from a relish of true virtue, or an idea of it's true beauty and excellence.—

Mr. H. observes that Mr. Edwards says, 'Natural conscience will approve of true virtue, without seeing the true beauty of it.' And upon it has the following words. 'Approve of that which you have no idea of, no relish for! Is not this a contradiction?'

Ans. No, by no means. What has been said, I hope, is a sufficient answer to this question. The approbation of conscience in this case is entirely a distinct thing from any relish and approbation of heart. By *approbation* of conscience here is meant *conviction of conscience*, or the reason and judgment dictating that true virtue is right, excellent, and most beautiful, which is a distinct thing from relishing, or seeing the beauty.

II. Mr. H. objects that 'From Mr. Edwards's doctrines it does necessarily follow, that men are under no natural obligation to be virtuous, and can't equitably be required to be so.' p. 34.

The sum of what he says in support of this is, 'Natural conscience and the moral sense can't taste and approve this kind of virtue, any more than the white of an egg; and natural reason, and common sense say there is no worth in it, nor any use or occasion for it in the moral world. Nothing but this preternatural principle itself (i. e. a truly virtuous taste, or a benevolent mind) can taste the sweetness of this primary beauty, or perceive any moral excellence in this sort of virtue:

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‘ It lies far beyond the sphere of natural conscience and
 ‘ the moral taste. It is no object to them ; consequent-
 ‘ ly man is, by the constitution of his nature, as incapable
 ‘ of seeing or tasting this primary beauty of moral things,
 ‘ as beasts are of relishing their secondary beauty. He
 ‘ is no more made for the one, than they are for the other,
 ‘ and is no more obliged to relish the one, than they are
 ‘ to relish the other ; and cannot equitably be required to
 ‘ do so, till a new faculty or taste is given him, adapted
 ‘ to this object, by a new creating act of power.’

Ans. 1. When Mr. H. says, natural conscience cannot approve of this kind of virtue, if by *approve* he means conviction of conscience, that this is true virtue, and that there is a beauty and excellence in it, while the heart disapproves and rejects it, his assertion is not true, as has been proved. If by *approve* he means a relish and approbation of heart, ’tis granted, and has been proved that no man, who has nothing of the nature of true virtue, can thus approve of it.

When he says ‘ natural reason and common sense say there is no worth in it’ (i. e. virtue which consists in benevolence to being in general) ‘ nor any use or occasion for it in the moral world,’ he only begs the question, and asserts what is most contrary to known fact. There are multitudes, the dictates of whose reason and common sense are, that all true worth and excellence consist in this ; and that this is the life, excellence and happiness of the moral world. And this is the universal dictate of natural reason and common sense, when properly enlightened, and impartial.

And his assertion, in which all the seeming force of his argument lies, is wholly without foundation, viz. That man is, *by the constitution of his nature*, as incapable of seeing or tasting this primary beauty of moral things, as the beasts are of relishing their secondary beauty. Man is, by the constitution of his nature, as capable of seeing and tasting this beauty, as he is of exercising virtue ;
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for this is one and the same thing. Man has all the *natural* faculties which are necessary in order to his being virtuous ; and therefore by the *constitution of his nature*, is capable of seeing and tasting the beauty of moral things, and of being perfectly holy. He wants nothing but an inclination to this, a heart to improve the faculties he has, in order to see and taste this beauty, and be truly virtuous. In short, he is furnished with every thing needful in order to see and exercise virtue, except it be virtue itself. This he has not ; but has every thing else, which a creature can have, and not be actually virtuous. And if the want of a virtuous disposition, or a heart to discern, and exercise virtue, and a strong and fixed opposite inclination, take off all obligation to virtue ; then it is not possible that any man should be under any obligation to exercise more virtue than he actually has, and does exercise ; and consequently there is no such thing as sin and blame or ill desert in nature.

But Mr. H. says, ‘ This is no more than saying, if they had this new kind of relish, they would have it, and if they had it, they might easily exercise it. But what is this to the purpose, when at the same time they confess, there is no natural faculty in human nature, by any possible application of truth to which, this taste can be raised up in the heart ? On these principles, we might, with as much reason, and as good a grace say, the inability a blind man is under to see and relish the beauty of light, is of the moral kind, and solemnly impute it to him as sin.’ p. 35.

Ans. This is saying that this new kind of relish depends on the will or heart, and consists in the disposition and exercise of that : That so long as the disposition and choice of the heart is wrong, and in opposition to virtue, it has no relish for it ; but when the mind is disposed and inclined to virtue, it has this taste and relish ; for they are one and the same thing. Therefore all the defect lies in the heart, being indisposed to love and choose that

that which is in itself most excellent, and to which it is invited by the strongest reasons and motives.

If Mr. H's servant should utterly refuse to live in his house, or obey him in any one thing, and declare that he saw nothing agreeable in his house, or any of his ways; but he took his whole delight in gaming, drinking and debauchery, and was determined to spend the rest of his life in these. His master would doubtless tell him, that he had a very false and bad taste indeed, that he was very capable of knowing and doing better, and it was wholly owing to the viciousness of his heart, that he could take no delight in his house and service, and had become such a disobedient servant, &c. and solemnly impute it to him, as his sin. If the servant should say, 'This is no more than saying, if I had a relish for your service and your ways, I should have it, and if I had it, I could easily exercise it, and should then be willing to stay with you: But as I have not this taste and turn of mind, but the contrary, you have no reason to blame me in the least, or think me under any obligation to love or obey you;' his master would doubtless think he argued very weakly. And if Mr. H. by all experiments in his power, should find nothing in him, 'by any possible application of truth, to which' he could raise up in his heart the least degree of taste and relish for the beauty and order of his house, or any inclination to live with him; but a fixed abhorrence of his service and all his ways, would this excuse his servant in his eyes? No: If he did not divest himself of all reason and common sense, the further he found his servant from all taste and relish for the business and enjoyment of his house, and the more impossible, by any applications to his mind, to raise in his heart such a taste, or eradicate the contrary, the more would he blame, and impute sin to him.

Ans. 2. We do indeed 'confess there is no natural faculty in human nature, by any possible application of truth, to which this taste can be raised up in the heart,'

so long as the will remains wholly perverse, & opposes all such applications ; & every one must confess this who will not hold the most palpable absurdity. But this does not suppose any want of natural faculties, or any natural defect in them ; all the defect lies in the inclination or will ; 'tis the perverse, obstinate resistance of *that*, to the applications made, which prevents their efficacy ; therefore the person is wholly blamable for not having this taste, if a perverse inclination is in any case blamable. This is illustrated in the instance of the servant above.

Ans. 3. Mr. H. himself allows the same thing, which he is here condemning. He says wicked men, or vicious minds have no virtuous taste, this being a distinct thing, and essentially different from any thing which they have ; and that their hearts are in opposition to it ; p. 32 33. and then goes on to say, ' There is no cure for this evil disease of the heart, but by the grace and truths of the gospel, *as strongly impressed upon the mind by the spirit of Christ.* ' If the perverseness and obstinacy of wicked minds prevails to that degree, under the enlightening influences and strivings of the spirit of truth and grace, as to provoke the Lord to withdraw his gracious influences, and give them wholly up to their own hearts lusts, their perverseness becomes *absolutely incurable*, and they go into perdition.'

According to this, men are as far from a virtuous taste as Mr. Edwards supposes they are ; and they can't be recovered to this by any thing but the spirit of Christ. And yet he holds they are under obligations to be virtuous, and to have this virtuous taste, even while they are under the power of this 'incurable disease,' incurable by any powers in themselves, or by any application, unless by the spirit of Christ ; and even incurable by him, 'absolutely incurable', if perversely and obstinately resisted by them. Let Mr. H. vindicate his own positions here, and he will answer all his objections against President Edwards, and his disciples, on this head.

Mr.

Mr. H. in his letter to Dr. Whitaker, p. 10. allows, 'That men must have these things presented to their view by God's teaching, before they *can* perceive their moral excellence.' Mr. H. may be asked, Why then are they under obligations to see this moral excellence, and relish it, antecedent to God's teachings, or the impressions of the spirit of Christ? What if the spirit does not *strongly impress* these things on the mind, and they have not God's teachings; will this leave them under no obligations to see and relish these things, and wholly blameless in their 'incurable disease?' It *must*, if what Mr. H. says on this head against Mr. Edwards has any reason & weight.—And why is their perverseness blamable, from whom the spirit of God withdraws himself? Why are they sent to perdition, since their disease always was incurable by themselves, and they are as far from a virtuous taste, as a blind man is from seeing the light; and it is become *absolutely incurable* now? As well may you condemn a blind man for not seeing and relishing the light of the sun, Mr. H. being judge.*

But

* I said above, Mr. H. holds that men who have no virtue, or virtuous taste, are under obligations to be virtuous; because this is supposed in his objection against Mr. Edwards, which we are considering, and is implied in all he says upon it. But I think he has said what is inconsistent with this, and a sufficient ground to conclude he does not hold that unregenerate men are under obligations to be holy. I have reference to what he says, when it was urged against him, that the representation given in his words just quoted, which he had before given, in substance, in his dialogues, was as inconsistent with man's obligations to be holy, &c. as the doctrines he objected against. They are the following words. 'The gospel is a ministration of supernatural truth & grace, fitted in its nature to work in the mind as a vital seed & sacred leaven; & the mind of man is naturally capable of being influenced and changed or spiritualized by it, *when firmly believed and realized*. The holy spirit of God accompanies this ministration of the word of life, with some degree of his influence, *as a common grace*. If sinners improve this, and the outward helps they have by the gospel, AS FAR AS THEY ARE IMPROVABLE BY THEM, I *believe* he will crown his common influence with special and effectual, leading them on to saving faith, and so regenerate them. If they

But as Mr. H. has undertaken to shew particularly what inability does not excuse, we will attend to that, and see if he has given any better account of the matter, than they do whom he thinks he opposes. He says, 'That kind of moral inability which does not excuse from blame, but rather aggravates it, is that which our Saviour, and the prophets and apostles charge upon the perverse Jews, when they say they have eyes and see not, ears and hear not, hearts capable of they do not, but continually resist and rebel against the motions of the spirit, and so provoke God to withdraw his spirit and give them up to final blindness and hardness of heart, the grace of the gospel is vindicated, and they perish as despisers of it. This belief is consistent with my doctrine above.' Letter to Dr. Whitaker, p. 32.

On these words the following things may be noted.

1. When Mr. H. says 'the mind of man is *naturally capable* of being influenced and changed by the truth of the gospel, *when firmly believed and realized*,' it is implied that it is not *naturally* capable of this, until this is the case; which he says is the work of the spirit alone; and that none can believe and realize it, unless *strongly impressed* by the spirit. According to this, men are not *naturally* capable of holiness, i. e. have no natural capacity while without the spirit causing them to realize the truth and strongly impressing it on their minds: Therefore cannot be under obligation to be holy. Thus he who, without any reason, charges Mr. Edwards with holding that sinners have no natural capacity of holiness, does himself assert it, so as to be *justly* liable to the charge.

2. He places all the sinner's duty in improving what he calls *common grace*, and the outward helps they have by the gospel, *as far as they are improvable by them*. This they may do without the exercise of the least degree of holiness; therefore they are not obliged to be holy; they not being capable of it, until they have the *special and effectual* influence of the spirit. Thus Mr. H. holds 'that men are under no natural obligation to be virtuous at all.' With how poor a grace then does this objection against Mr. Edwards's doctrine come from him?

3. His *belief* that God will *effectually* lead them on to saving faith, and so regenerate them who improve the common influences of the spirit, *as far as they are improvable by them*, (i. e. as far as is consistent with reigning lust, & enmity against God) is a belief without any evidence from scripture, or any other quarter; and therefore *this belief* is doubtless consistent with *all* his doctrines, as it is with all the doctrines of Arminians and Pelagians; who have as much of this fond belief as Mr. Hart.

‘ of understanding, and yet understand not; &c. *It consists in an indisposition, and perverse refusal to exert those moral powers which men have.*’

He has here given a very good account. The disease lies wholly in the indisposition and perverseness of the will or heart; therefore their not seeing, and all their inability to see, is their own fault. This account is indeed agreeable to scripture, and to reason and common sense; and is the very same they give of the matter, whom Mr. H. thinks he is opposing. He goes on ‘ But upon the principles of Mr. Edwards’s scheme; the inability of natural men to see, or rather taste the sweetness of what he calls virtue, consists in the want of a *natural faculty*, or taste suited to the object.’ This is a most ungrounded and injurious assertion, directly contrary to the whole tenor of Mr. Edwards’s writings. I might on as good ground say, that according to Mr. H. in the account above, men’s inability to see consists in the want of a natural faculty, because they want a disposition or heart to see. Men shut their own eyes, through an indisposition and perverse refusal to exert the powers to have, in seeing and relishing divine things. The spirit of God alone can cure this evil disease of the heart, by removing this indisposition and perverse refusal to see, and so opening the eyes of the blind. This is a renewing the will, or changing the heart, to discern and taste the sweetness and excellence of true holiness, and not giving any new natural faculty.

And now the reader is left to judge whether Mr. H. has in any measure supported his objection. I proceed to the consideration of another.

III. Mr. H. says Mr. Edwards is grossly inconsistent with himself in what he says of natural conscience.— p. 27.

Mr. H. observes Mr. Edwards says that ‘ natural conscience, if well informed, will approve of true virtue, and will disapprove and condemn the want of it; and yet without

without seeing the true beauty of it. If men's consciences were fully enlightened, as they will be at the day of judgment, they would approve nothing but true virtue." And then remarks upon it, "Thus natural conscience does, and does not, can, and can't taste or approve the true beauty of virtue."

Ans. What has been said, in answer to the first objection, may serve to shew how groundless this is, and that Mr. Edwards is perfectly consistent here. Reason and conscience may be truly convinced, and I judge, that virtue consists in general benevolence, and in nothing else; and therefore that this is the highest beauty and excellence; and yet the mind have no taste for this beauty, and consequently no true discerning of it. Reason and conscience may be so enlightened and convinced, as to judge perfectly right in this matter, which will doubtless be the case at the day of judgment, without any taste of the beauty of virtue, and consistent with the greatest distaste and abhorrence of it.

Mr. H. might as easily, and with as much reason, fasten a contradiction on our Lord, because he has said of his persecutors, "They have both *seen*, and hated, both me and my Father," Joh. xv. 24. and yet at the same time, said of the same persons, "They have not known the Father, nor me," chap. xvi. 3. And with as good reason might he charge St. John with expressly contradicting his Lord and master, when he says, "Whosoever sinneth, hath *not seen* him, neither *known him*," 1 Joh. iii. 6. Whereas Christ says of some of the greatest sinners, "*they have seen* both me, and my Father." In a word, the bible is so express in this, that they who do evil, even all who have no true virtue, whatever advantages they are under to know God; and whatever knowledge of God they have by natural conscience and moral sense; yet do not know God, nor have seen him, and do not see nor know the holy spirit, who is the sum of all holiness in God and the creature, Joh. xiv. 27, that tis

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not a little wonderful, Mr. H. should take such great exceptions against Mr. Edwards's saying the same thing, and imagine he had contradicted himself.

Mr. Edwards says, natural conscience, when well informed, and thoroughly awakened, approves true virtue, and indeed approves nothing that falls short of it. Upon this Mr. H. says, "But the secondary beauty falls short of it." Because Mr. Edwards had said there is in natural conscience, a taste for secondary or natural beauty, he supposes he has here contradicted himself. But all the seeming contradiction lies in Mr. H's mistake. Mr. Edwards's plain meaning is, that natural conscience is capable of being convinced what true virtue is, so as to judge or pronounce that, & nothing which falls short of it, to be virtue. There may be a taste for secondary beauty, and yet conscience not approve of this as true virtue; but pronounce it not to be so.

The following words of Mr. H. are remarkable. Speaking of Mr. Edwards's sentiments, he says, 'At the day of judgment natural conscience will be so improved' (i.e. according to Mr. Edwards) 'as to see the true beauty of virtue, consisting in general benevolence, and wholly approve it; which nothing but virtuous benevolence can do. Will not the wicked then become virtuous, according to this doctrine?' p. 27, 28.

Ans. The doctrine is not Mr. Edwards's, but Mr. H's. One which he has invented, and palmed on Mr. Edwards. Mr. Edwards does not say that conscience will at the day of judgment see the true beauty of virtue, but he says directly the contrary in the clearest and strongest terms. *

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* It is not easy to say how Mr. H. could be guilty of this gross misrepresentation, and abuse, who is so great an advocate for fairness, candour, honesty and justice in controversial writings. He must be very eager to find contradictions, who will take such a method to do it. No one will envy Mr. H. the triumph and flourish he has made upon this, in the following words, 'Error is fated to run crooked. The greatest men cannot govern and keep it straight. It is our wil-

dom

WE will now attend to Mr. H's account of natural conscience or moral sense, and see how he distinguishes it from a virtuous taste, between which he says there is 'a real and essential difference.' He says, 'By the moral discernment and taste, natural to man, we are constituted moral agents. By the exercise of this moral faculty the things that are morally good or virtuous are seen to be so, as *such* are approved, the obligation we are under to choose and practise them, is felt, in *some degree*. This does not render a man virtuous. To render a man truly virtuous or holy his heart must agree with his enlightened conscience or moral sense; or in other words, his will must choose, with *preferring love*, and a determined resolution to practise what is approved and recommended by the moral sense; and this, not in some particular branches of virtue only, but in its whole extent.—This sense, choice and attachment of heart to God, or to virtue and its interests, is that wherein a truly virtuous taste or spiritual sense consists, as distinguished from the natural, moral sense of the mind: They are really two distinct things, though in perfect harmony. p. 32, 33.

On this it may be observed,

1. What Mr. H. here says may be understood so as to be perfectly consistent with Mr. Edwards. He distinguishes natural conscience and moral sense from the heart or will, and supposes the latter may oppose the clearest dictates of the former. Mr. Edwards grants that by natural conscience 'the things that are morally good or virtuous are seen to be so, as *such* are approved;'

so
dom to have nothing to do with it. Since so great a man as Mr. Edwards could not alter its crooked nature, but was drawn by its wilily turnings into numberless inconsistencies, 'tis in vain for others to attempt to manage so involved a creature.' The error; the crookedness be upon Mr. H. It lies wholly with him. If the great EDWARDS, who wrote with so much clearness and precision, may be so perverted and charged in the lump with *numberless inconsistencies*; it is truly in vain for others to attempt to tame the *crooked, involved creature*, who will do all this.

so far as they can be seen and approved, without any taste or approbation of heart ; and the obligation we are under to choose and practise them, is in some sense and degree seen and felt. And that a virtuous taste consists in quite a different thing, viz. a disposition to love and choose what a well enlightened conscience dictates to be right. And this is all Mr. H. seems to say here. If we understand him as meaning no more, it is not only consistent with all that Mr. Edwards says of natural conscience, and a virtuous taste ; but he will be consistent with himself, when he says, They who ‘ have not received the spirit of God, as their teacher, in his revelation of the hidden things of God to men, and do not give credit to his supernatural witness to their truth ; but act under the biasing and blinding influence of the spirit of error and worldly lusts, *do not receive these things as true and divine, neither can they know them to be so, so long as they refuse the light and witness of the spirit of God ; for they are spiritually discerned.*’— (Letter to Dr. Wh——r, p. 60.) I do not pretend to understand Mr. Hart’s laboured explanation of the text which speaks of the natural man’s not discerning the things of the spirit of God. He is to me very dark and confused, if not inconsistent, and has left the text as unintelligible, at least, as he found it. However, I think we may safely conclude that in the passage now quoted, by them who have not received the spirit, and do not give credit to his witness, he means all unholy men. And these, he says, do not receive the things of God as true and divine, neither can they know them to be so. Then certainly they do not see their true beauty and excellence, their blinding lusts do effectually blind their eyes to this ; for if they see this, they must see them to be true and divine, and know them to be so. Now this is all that Mr. Edwards asserts. This therefore makes him inconsistent with himself in opposing Mr. Edwards ; for he is herein opposing himself as much.

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2. But if we understand him here as saying any thing really in opposition to Mr. Edwards, and agreeable to what he elsewhere supposes and asserts, viz. that men who have no virtuous taste, do see the true beauty and excellence of virtue, and *relish* it as such, p. 29. he has not only expressed himself in a very dark, ambiguous manner; so that 'tis difficult to know what he means; but is inconsistent with the above quoted passage of his own, and even with himself in this very passage: But, what is worse, he contradicts the bible, as well as plain reason and common sense. For,

3. To see the amiableness and excellence of an object, and taste and relish it, as beautiful and excellent, is precisely the same with loving that object, with a love of complacency. Therefore if men naturally see God's holiness as amiable, beautiful and excellent, and have a relish for it, as such, they do know God, in the highest sense of knowing him, and they do love him; for these are one and the same thing. To say there is no love in this sweet sense and relish of God's amiableness, is contrary to reason and common sense. And to say that men naturally have such a knowledge and love of God, is contrary to scripture; and is contrary to this very passage of Mr. H's; for he says this natural conscience and moral taste is a different thing from a virtuous taste; yea there is an *essential difference* between them; and does not imply any relish or choice of the object, but the choice, or will may be directly opposed to it. What then does Mr. H. mean by his *moral taste*? He gave such a description of it in his dialogue, that it was thought it necessarily implied a degree of true love to God, and to holiness, or a really virtuous taste: But when he saw this construction was put upon it, he complained that he was greatly abused, and said he meant no such thing. But has not yet shewn his consistence in this, so far as I can judge. He asserts that 'a perception of beauty is not love' of beauty; but
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has offered no proof, nor will he ever do it. * Therefore,

4. The only way I can think of to make Mr. H. in any measure consistent with himself in these things, is to suppose that by moral taste, by which the true beauty of virtue is seen and relished, he intends the same thing in kind with a virtuous taste; and that the difference lies wholly in the different degrees of the same kind of thing. That when this sight and relish of the beauty and excellence of virtue is in so low a degree as not to govern the mind, and suppress all contrary lusts, it is not true love to God or to holiness, so is not a holy love; that this consists not in this low degree of relish & love, but in a 'preferring love,' which so prevails as to bear down all opposite lusts. His way of expressing himself on this head gives ground to think this is his notion. In the passage under consideration, he says this moral sense, common to all men, approves of virtue, and feels the obligation they are under to practise it, *in some degree*; but does not render them virtuous, while vicious lusts prevail, and the prevailing relish of the heart is in opposition to this moral sense. To render a man truly virtuous or holy, his will must choose with *preferring love*, and *determined resolution* to practice what is approved by the moral sense. And he always speaks after this manner, on this subject. He says, a man may see and approve the beauty of virtue, *in some degree*, when *the ruling* dispositions and exercises of his heart are inconsistent with this, p. 20; 21. Speaking of men who have

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* He has attempted to shew that his moral taste, and sense of the amiableness of holiness, is not love of holiness, in his letter to Dr. Whitaker, p. 8 9. to which the reader is referred. I don't see any proof of this in all that he has there said. The most that he says, is an account of natural conscience and moral taste, very consistent with that which Mr. Edwards gives, and he makes a proper distinction between this and the heart, choice or will, in its judgment in favour of virtue, &c. But he has not shewn that there may be a sight of the beauty and amiableness of holiness, and a taste and relish for it, without any exercise of heart or choice in favour of it; and while the heart hates and opposes it. Unless he can do this, his cause cannot be maintained.

no virtue, he says, ' Their hearts in many instances con-
' cur, *in some degree*, with the moral sense of their minds.
' A sense of equity, moral honor, of gratitude ; a spirit of
' benevolence, compassion, &c. and some kind of regard
' to God influence them to do many worthy deeds,—
' when yet they will deny and counteract all these for some
' other lusts, and under greater temptations, and have no
' *effectually governing regard* to God, and to virtue, its in-
' terests and reward, p. 48. The heart does not embrace
' the truths believed, *with governing love*' p. 51. He ex-
presses himself in the same way on this head, in his letter
to Dr. Whitaker : He says the sight and taste of the amia-
bleness of holiness, and approbation of actions and charac-
ters morally good, is not *holy love*, as tis not the same with
their being chosen and embraced by the will, *in preference*
to all that stands in competition with them. p. 6. And that
it, ' is not the same thing with a *supreme love* and *preferring*
choice of them, by the heart ; which is essential to true
virtue,' p. 10. He does not say there is *no degree* of real
love of holiness in this sight and relish of the true beauty
of it ; but he says 'tis not *holy love* ; i. e. *supreme love*,
and *preferring choice*.

These expressions are suited to such a notion of virtue,
as consists in a *prevailing, governing degree* of the same
kind of dispositions and exercises which all men have ;
but are not true virtue till they rise to such strength and
high degree, as to *rule and govern* in the heart : And, I
think, they are not consistent with any other notion of it.

But if this is his notion, he has designedly covered him-
self, and carefully avoided speaking out plainly, which if
he had done, we should better know what to say to him.
For it might be easily proved, that such a notion of virtue
is very unreasonable, and contrary to the bible. And it
does not well consist with his saying, that this same taste &
relish of the true beauty of virtue is *essentially different* from
a virtuous taste ; for the things which are of the same na-
ture and kind, and differ only in degree, can't properly be
said

said to have an *essential difference*. So that even this supposition will not make him consistent. I hope, if he ever writes again, he will honestly and with all plainness tell what he means. *

As a conclusion to this and the foregoing section, the following observations may be made.

1. The holy scripture represents all men who are not true believers, and not born of the spirit, as in such darkness and blindness that they do not see and know God and Jesus Christ, and cannot see the things of God's kingdom, Joh. 3. 3. do not see the spirit of God, Joh. 14. 17. nor can discern the things of the spirit, 1 Cor. 2. 14. so that the gospel is hid from them, 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. That they only who have a virtuous taste and are regenerate, do know God and Jesus Christ, Joh. 17. 3. 1 Joh. 4. 8. and *taste* his goodness, Plaf. 34. 8. 1 Pet. 2. 3. i. e. discern and relish his moral perfection or holiness, which is love or goodness. And they only have the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. 4. 6. with respect to which all the unregenerate are in total darkness, which glory can be nothing else but holiness, which is the beauty and glory of the moral world. And yet the scripture represents these persons, who are thus blind, as actually blamable for not having that virtue and holiness which they do not see, and not loving what is hid from them; and that this blindness and unbelief is itself a very great crime; though they cannot be cured of it, so as to see the marvellous light of God's beauty and glory, by any thing but the mighty power of God, quickening, and new creating them, making them new creatures, opening their eyes, or giving them eyes to see, or a new heart, a heart to perceive and understand. Now,

* This was Dr. Mayhew's scheme; though he did not think it best to declare it expressly in any of his publications. And this is the scheme of most Arminians; and of many who call themselves *moderate Calvinists*. But none of them, I think, have yet undertaken expressly to vindicate it before the public.

Now, since this is the scripture account, it is sufficient to support all that Mr. Edwards has said on this head, and ought to silence all Mr. H's objections, until he can shew that it is not the same with that which Mr. Edwards has given, and is consistent with unregenerate men seeing and relishing these things in a sense and manner, in which Mr. Edwards says they do not: For, as the case now stands, his objections seem to be equally against the holy scriptures.

2. What Mr. Edwards has said, and Mr. H. objects against, is perfectly agreeable to reason and experience. That they who have no virtue, and whose hearts are wholly governed by contrary inclinations and lusts, cannot, while they remain so, see and relish the beauty of true virtue, is, in a sense, a self-evident proposition, as the contrary implies a most evident contradiction. * Besides, we know by experience, that we get the idea of all those things which belong to the mind and heart, by what takes place in our own minds and hearts; and cannot obtain it any other way. For instance, we obtain the idea of love, by the exercise of this in our own hearts. If nothing of this kind had ever taken place in our minds, we could not have any true idea of it. And though men exercise a sort of love, and so know what it is; yet, if this is a love which is distinct in its nature from disinterested benevolence, it will not help them to the true idea of such benevolence; and they never can have it, till this takes place in their hearts. The inclination and lusts of their hearts, which are inconsistent with the least degree of benevolent love and goodness, do necessarily blind their eyes, and shut all true knowledge of this love, all true sense and relish of its beauty, out of their minds. However, they may from the various tastes and exercises of their hearts, and their mental powers, be able to reason well upon the subject, and be convinced that benevolence,

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and

* This is so evident, that a heathen could say, 'A mind destitute of virtue, cannot see the beauty of truth.' Hierocles.

and the affections included in this, is true virtue, and that nothing which falls short of it is virtue, or has any moral excellence. And as their eyes are shut to the beauty of holiness, and this is excluded from their hearts by nothing but their lusts, they really close their own eyes, to keep the light from them; and are therefore wholly inexcusable in their ignorance and lusts: And their conscience may be convinced of this, and that they are justly condemned for their blindness and want of holiness.

3. Mr. H. has really acknowledged all this, even all that Mr. Edwards has asserted; so that all his opposition to Mr. Edwards is, in effect, opposition to himself. This has been evident, I conclude, to every attentive, discerning reader, from what has been observed. He allows that the eyes of all unbelievers are fast closed, and shut so as not to receive the knowledge of the truth; which cannot be opened, but by the powerful work of the spirit of God; and that this blindness, is so far from excusing men for not being virtuous, and not seeing its beauty, that it rather aggravates their guilt. That all the children of Adam are naturally without the spirit of God, and that while they are in this case (in which they all are, till they receive the spirit of Christ, and become true believers in him) 'they are led and influenced in their judgment' 'concerning these things' (i. e. the things of the gospel) 'by the spirit that is of this world; i. e. act under the biasing and blinding influence of the spirit of error, and
'worldly

* *In their judgment.* If by judgment here, Mr. H. means reason and conscience judging, he carries the matter much further than Mr. Edwards does, and further than the truth; for he says the judgment, in this sense, may be right and according to the truth, even in men destitute of the spirit, and under the dominion of the spirit of this world, and their blinding lusts. It is granted that lust and sin in the heart does, in many instances, blind and pervert the reason and conscience of men; but this is not always so. If by judgment, he means the taste and discerning of the heart, he asserts the same thing which Mr. Edwards does, and which he himself objects against.—

‘worldly lusts. Such do not receive these things as true and divine, neither can they know them to be so. They may in some measure see what his doctrine is ; and see his works and witness by the gospel revelation ; *but they don't see the spirit of God in them.*’ (Letter to Dr. W. p. 60, 61.) If they do not see the spirit of God in the doctrines and works of Christ, they do not see their holiness ; but all the beauty of this is entirely hid from them ; for he who is blind to the holy spirit, is blind to holiness itself. This needs no proof. Now this is all that is implied in what Mr. Edwards has said. I know Mr. H. says, that according to Mr. Edwards’s doctrine, men have no natural capacity, by which they may see the beauty of virtue, & become holy ; and that they can be brought to this only by the immediate, physical, miraculous, work of the spirit of God, &c. but this might as reasonably be charged on Mr. H’s doctrine, and as easily proved.

4. Not only man’s blindness to the beauty of true virtue, which Mr. Edwards speaks of, is consistent with their obligations to holiness ; but they may be obliged, though their reason and conscience be blinded and deceived. ’Tis not necessary that natural conscience and moral taste should dictate right, and pronounce true holiness to be so, and that it is beautiful and excellent, and the contrary wrong and hateful, in order to the man’s being under obligations to be holy, and wholly to blame for not being so. A man may be so deceived as to believe in his conscience that the highest virtue is nothing but a piece of wickedness, and that he ought to hate it ; and yet be under obligations to love and practice it. This all will grant, I conclude. The reason is, because such blindness of the judgment and conscience, and perversion of the moral taste, is wholly owing to the blinding lusts of the heart, so that if the heart were right, reason and conscience would judge according to truth. And if the heart remains blind, and sees not the beauty and

and excellence of virtue, but hates it, though the dictates of the conscience are right, and reason pronounces it beautiful and lovely; is not this as blamable, at least, as if reason and conscience agreed with the heart? Shall the blinding lusts of men's hearts take off all obligations to love what they disrelish and hate, though conscience tell them, that 'tis excellent and lovely; when this same blindness of heart, if it blinds the conscience too, and bribes that to agree with it, would be altogether blamable? How unreasonable then is Mr. H's objection against Mr. Edwards's doctrine of the blindness of men's hearts with respect to the beauty of virtue; as if, according to this, they were under no obligation to holiness! And it is now left to the reader to judge whether all his objections against Mr. Edwards's account of true virtue, are not equally without foundation.



S E C T I O N IV.

Mr. Hart's account of the essential nature of true virtue, and of a defective sort of virtue, &c. considered.

AS Mr. H. had opposed Mr. Edwards's notion of true virtue, as wrong, and subversive of all religion, and then undertook to shew what is the essential nature of true virtue, we might reasonably expect he would fix on something which is in its nature essentially different from that which Mr. Edwards describes, and particularly shew what it is, and wherein the difference lies. But we are wholly disappointed! He has not described virtue, so as to give his readers any clear idea of it, or shew wherein it differs from that which Mr. Edwards describes. He says true virtue consists in **EQUITABLE AFFECTION** towards God and our fellow-creatures. This is consistent with what Mr. Edwards has said: According to him, it

consists

consists in *equitable affection*; and he has particularly shewn what this is; and that nothing is equitable affection but benevolence to being in general, and the affections included in this.

And when what Mr. H. says about his *equitable affection* is put together, it will agree to nothing else, but the same universal benevolence, or love to being in general; which he seems to think he is opposing. He allows that all equitable affection or holiness in the creature consists in *love*, p. 43. And speaks of this as a love of kindness or benevolence, a 'friendly regard' to the object beloved; and says this is 'in effect universal love,' p. 47. and that this universal friendly love, is a conformity to God's holiness, p. 43. which must therefore consist in this same love. And he particularly speaks of this *equitable affection* in God, as exercised in universal love or goodness; which is the same with love to being in general, or to being, as such; viz. a disposition 'to give his family of rational creatures as great a measure of happiness as can be communicated by the exercise of a paternal government over them.' p. 42. Thus we see Mr. H. represents his equitable affection as a *friendly love*, which is really *universal benevolence*; which is love to being in general. And he says, 'This spirit of equitable, FRIENDLY REGARD, will dispose the virtuous mind to behave to every one, in a manner suitable to their various characters, offices, and relations.' p. 47. This *friendly regard* is benevolence, and nothing else, and it must be universal benevolence, if it will dispose to behave to *every one* in a suitable manner. And this must be true virtue in its essential nature, and comprehend the whole of holiness, as this will lead to *all* right exercises and conduct towards *every one*.

Mr. H. seems indeed to suppose that he is here opposing Mr. Edwards's notion of true virtue, as essentially wrong, and repeatedly asserts it to be so, but, as his assertions don't so much respect the essential nature of true

true virtue, as the manner in which it takes place and begins in men, and the cause and medium by which it is produced; and as he says nothing here on this head which he had not said before, and has been considered; and since he does not pretend to argue, but seems to expect the reader will believe his bare assertions, without any manner of proof, they are not worthy of any further attention. However, it may be proper to take a little notice of two passages in this chapter.

Mr. H. having asserted 'That God himself is the source and support of virtue in us, which is the attraction and active tendency of our minds towards him, in consequence of their being brought under the attractive influence of his blessed character and gracious love to us in Jesus Christ,' goes on to say,—'To talk of a moral change in the mind, forming the heart to a virtuous temper, as preceding this attraction of God upon the mind, and as necessary to render that effectual, is the same absurdity in divinity or moral philosophy, as it would be in natural, to assert that a body naturally cold, must first change its nature, & become of a hot nature, like the sun, before it can be warmed by the action of the sun's rays upon it, however near the sun may approach towards it. p. 44, 45.

Ans. A body, naturally cold, must be of such a nature and construction, as to receive the rays of light and heat from the sun, or imbibe them so that they shall be in a sense incorporated with it, in order to its being warmed by them. If a body should not be of such a nature and construction, but formed so as to repel the rays of the sun, no degree of heat from the sun would impart the least heat to that, till the nature of it is changed, or without the exertion of a power upon it, entirely different from the influence of the heat of the sun. Mr. H's instance is therefore not to the purpose; for it does not appear, that 'tis the least absurdity in natural philosophy to assert, that a body perfectly cold, and of such a nature as to repel all heat,

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heat, cannot be warmed by the action of the sun's rays upon it; for, by the supposition, they cannot act upon it, while it is of such a nature.—

THE other passage I would take notice of, is in the following words, 'virtue, as it respects our neighbour, summarily consists in loving him *as ourselves*. Which implies that there is a love of ourselves, which is virtuous, and approved of God: Otherwise our loving our neighbour as ourselves, could not be a virtuous love.' p. 46. What Mr. H. here observes is doubtless true, and his argument just and conclusive. There is a love of ourselves which is virtuous; but this is not self-love; for this is, in every degree of it, sinful: But 'tis that love of ourselves, which is implied in universal benevolence. This has been already particularly considered. § Therefore if Mr. H. by a love of ourselves meant selfishness, or any thing different from universal benevolence, his assertion is not true.

MR. HART has a chapter on 'that defective sort of virtue which is found in some unregenerate men,' to which I shall now attend. He says, 'Tis undoubtedly true in fact, that many men, who are not truly religious, practice many duties. Their hearts, in many instances, concur, *in some degree*, with the moral sense of their minds. A sense of equity, of moral honor, of gratitude, and a spirit of benevolence, compassion, &c. and some kind of regard to God, influence them to do many worthy deeds, worthy in some respects: So are in a great degree inconsistent with themselves, in their dispositions and conduct: And he says of him who practises these duties, 'The action he does is a right action, in respect to what is positive in it, commanded by God, and the motive on which he acts is a right motive, one of the motives God wills him to be influenced by.' p. 48, 49, 50. He says this is not true virtue;

§ See preceding inquiry, Sect. iv. p. 24, 25, 26.

true ; not because it is not in itself right and duty ; but because it is not attended with something else, which ought to take place, viz. an effectually governing regard to God

On this the following observations may be made.

1. There seems to be a great absurdity in this ; viz. that a man's heart should concur, in some degree, with his enlightened conscience or moral sense, & he have a spirit of true benevolence, and some kind of regard to God, under the influence of which he does his duty, what God requires, from the motives which God has commanded him to be influenced by ; and yet not exercise the least degree of true holiness. This is indeed a great paradox, and seems to be as much of a contradiction as to say, a man may be holy, and yet have no holiness. If a person may do his duty, and have his heart conformed to the law of God in the exercise of true gratitude, benevolence and compassion or mercy, and yet not exercise any true virtue, it is doubtless impossible to tell what virtue is. If it does not consist in benevolence, in duty, and obedience to the law of God, and conformity of heart to it, we may despair of ever finding it in any creature.

Mr. H. says, this is not true virtue but 'essentially deficient' because there is no governing, or religious regard to God. But this is so far from giving a rational account of the matter, that it supposes what is impossible, viz. that the former may be without the latter. There is no such character in nature as Mr. H. here gives. He whose heart is opposed to a religious regard to God, is equally opposed to every thing which God has commanded. He who is benevolent and merciful, knows God and loves him, and cannot but have a religious regard to him, (See Jer. xxi. 15, 16. Mat. v. 7.) Mr. H. says "'Tis undeniably true in fact, that there is such a character ;' but he has asserted this in opposition to scripture and reason. Yea he has herein opposed himself ; for in the preceding chapter he represents love to our fellow men and all equitable

equitable regard to them, as the fruit of love to God, and flowing from it, being 'the result of a truly pious and filial regard to him.' p. 46, 47. Here he asserts that this equitable regard to men, a regard to justice, benevolence and compassion, takes place, when there is no religious regard to God; and that when this *religious regard to God* is added to this benevolence, it is sanctified by it, and forms a truly virtuous character. *

2. Since Mr. H. has only asserted these things, without attempting any proof of them, I have none of his arguments to answer. He has, however, referred to two passages of scripture, as an illustration of what he asserts, which perhaps ought to be considered. He observes, when the Jews had set their servants free, according to God's command, but soon brought them into bondage again; God, reproving them for their last conduct, says, with reference to their dismissing them, 'ye had done right in my sight.' Jer. 34. 15. This he mentions, I conclude, to prove that wicked men who have no true virtue, may do that which is *right in God's sight*. p. 51. marg.

Ans. God in these words has reference to their external conduct, and not to their hearts, and the motives from which they acted; and speaks to them, not as the searcher of hearts; but as looking on their outward conduct, and treating them accordingly. Mr. H. allows that all the actions which spring from vicious motives, and lusts of heart, are positively vicious. p. 52. But 'tis pretty evident the Jews did not let their servants go free, from any higher or less vicious motive, than that which influenced them to bring them into bondage again. The king
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* This passage is agreeable to the notion that all men have *some degree* of that love to God and their neighbour in which true holiness consists; but being *defective*, i. e. not *governing love*, it cannot be called holiness. The whole of this chapter is suited to such a notion, as is most Mr. H. says; else where of his *moral taste*; though he has some expressions which seem to be inconsistent with this. See p. 126, 127, of this appendix.

of Babylon had laid close siege to the city, and they feared the destruction that was threatened. The prophets told them to dismiss their servants, as one way to obtain deliverance. But when their danger seemed to be over, the Chaldeans having raised the siege, in order to repel Pharaoh's army, which was coming for the relief of the Jews, they brought their servants into bondage again. They did not release them, from any regard to justice, from benevolence and compassion, but from the same sordid, selfish motive, under the influence of which they forced them into their service again, when they thought the danger of the evil was over, from fears of which they let them go. They acted from the same motive which induced Pharaoh and the Egyptians to let the Israelites go; and therefore when their fears of destruction were removed, they repented, as Pharaoh did. And I conclude, Mr. H. will not say that Pharaoh exercised even his *defective sort of virtue* in letting the people of Israel go, and even thrusting them out of Egypt.

Mr. H. represents this *defective virtue*, which he says is *good*, and *doing well*, so far as it goes, 'the agent being faulted only for that which is wanting in his work,' by what he says is called historical faith, of which St. James says, 'Thou believest there is one God, thou *doest well*. But lest men should rest here, he adds, devils also believe and tremble.' This he brings as a proof that wicked men may *do well*. And supposes that to encourage them to do better, the apostle adds, 'The devils also believe and tremble.' p. 52. It is evident at first view, that he tells them their doing well was no better than what the devils do: Yea, he represents the devils as going further than they did; for they not only believe, but tremble. Can any one seriously think the apostle meant to represent the devils as *doing well*? This is shocking indeed! As well may we suppose our Saviour commends the Pharisees and Scribes as doing well, when he says 'full well ye reject the commandment of God,' Mark

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Mark 7. 9. The sense of the apostle's words is as plain and natural, as of these words of Christ, and they are spoke in the same way. As if he had said, 'You believe there is one God. Well done! A fine attainment this! This is to do as well as the devils, except that they not only believe, but tremble also.' It is to be observed, that the word used by Christ, translated *full well*, is the same that the apostle uses here. If Mr. H's defective sort of virtue is 'fitly resembled' to this faith, as he says it is, and is found to as great degree, at least, among the devils, as 'in some unregenerate men,' it turns out to be a very low, 'defective sort of virtue' indeed, by which, they who have it are not much distinguished from the worst of men, unless *they* are much worse than devils. §

Mr. H. says, 'There are certain middle principles or springs of action wrought into the mind of man, by our gracious Creator, which, though they are not virtuous, and do not necessary imply a principle of virtue in the heart, yet are friendly to virtue, and espouse its cause within us, suppose the mind duly instructed: Such are reason, natural conscience, the moral sense or taste, &c.' p. 49, 50.

Remark 1st. It seems to be a contradiction, that there should be any thing in the mind of man, which is *friendly to virtue*, which is not virtue, nor implies any principle of virtue in the heart. Can there be any thing in the heart *friendly to virtue*, which has nothing of the nature of virtue? If a man is a true friend to virtue, we think we may safely pronounce him a virtuous man.

Remark 2d. What Mr. H. instances in here are consistent with the highest degree of wickedness; as they take place in a higher degree in devils, than in men. Reason

§ Mr. H. complains of Dr. Whitaker for saying 'Man is turned devil'; and says 'before he gets out of his hands, he makes him look worse than a devil, Dial. p. 42. But he has now fallen into the same wickedness himself, while he represents those men, who do not believe and tremble, as worse than devils.

son and natural conscience, if enlightened, do in a sense 'espouse the cause of virtue,' i. e. bear testimony in its favour. But this is consistent with the greatest degree of vice; and serves to set the sinner further from all virtue, if possible, by rendering him more criminal and vile; for the more clear this testimony is, the more opposition is made to it by the sinner, and the more criminal he is, in refusing to comply with the dictates of his conscience. This Mr. H. himself allows. He says, 'These have some degree of influence in natural men.' I ask, what influence? Do they influence them in the least degree to comply with that, whose cause they espouse? This Mr. H. denies; for this would make them virtuous. All the influence they can have then, while their hearts oppose virtue, is to render this opposition more vile and criminal, as well as stronger, and more directly turned against that, in which true virtue consists. Mr. H. allows that if men resist the call of reason and conscience, and refuse to comply with their dictates, they hereby become much worse, and that herein consists the exceeding sinfulness of sin; but this they do, so long as they refuse to become truly virtuous, if conscience espouses the cause of virtue in them. What room then is there left for Mr. H's 'defective sort of virtue,' by means of the dictates of natural conscience? It is wholly excluded; or rather is nothing but the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

Remark 3d. If we should grant all Mr. H. says here, that 'there are principles or springs of action, wrought into the mind of man, by our gracious Creator, which are friendly to virtue:' Why may not a *principle of true virtue* be wrought into the mind by God, as well as these principles, which are friendly to virtue? These principles of action, which are favourable to virtue, are not wrought in the mind by moral power, or the power of divine truth or love; but by creating power, I conclude Mr. H. will allow. Why may not the principles and springs of virtuous actions themselves be wrought

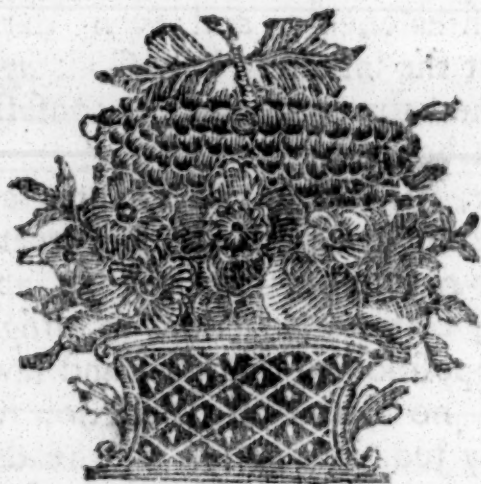
wrought into the mind in the same way, and by the same power? The same power that can form in the mind principles friendly to virtue, can doubtless create virtuous principles themselves, in the very same way.

Mr. H. speaking of his defective sort of virtue, says, 'There is an essential defect in the agent, which renders him *not well accepted*. His action is *essentially deficient*, and *can't be accepted*, as an instance of true, divine virtue.' And yet he says in the same page 'There is something in them which is right, and required by God. This is *approved*, not abhorred and thrown back as *dung* in the faces of the doers of them.' See p. 50, 51. This seems to be no less than a contradiction. The same doings are not well accepted, and can't be accepted; and yet they are *approved*, i. e. are accepted; for I conclude *accepted*, and *approved*, mean the same thing. Besides, is it not very unreasonable, and even daring presumption, to say, that the infinitely holy God *approves* of that moral exercise and conduct, which is confessed not to be of the nature of holiness?

On the whole, Mr. H. in this chapter censures them who represent all the doings of the unregenerate, as having nothing in their nature but sin, and an abomination to God; and their best moral actions as altogether vicious, and in direct opposition to the spirit and law of God, &c. But has offered no matter of conviction from scripture or reason. Any judicious person who reads this chapter, must be sensible how empty it is of any shadow of argument.

This middle character, this sort of exercises and doings, which are neither sinful nor holy, are not known in the bible; and is a meer chimera, full of inconsistencies. This, I trust, will appear to any one, who attends to the account given, from the scripture, of holiness and sin, in the foregoing inquiry. The scripture representation of all men by nature is, that there is none that *doth good*, no *not one*, Rom. iii. 12. That the mind, the whole heart of every

every one who has not the spirit of Christ, is enmity against God, and his law, Rom. viii. 7, 8, 9. And Christ says, 'He that is not for me, is *against me*. Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt.' Mr. H. has not taken this advice; but has made the fruit of a tree, which he acknowledges to be corrupt, not corrupt, but good, even so good as to be *approved* by God!





A P P E N D I X.

N U M B E R II.

REMARKS on some passages in the piece entitled, 'The visible church in covenant with God, further illustrated. Containing also, a brief representation of some other gospel doctrines, which affect the controversy. Interspersed with remarks upon some things advanced by Dr. Bellamy, and Mr. Hopkins, in these important points. By MOSES MATHER, A. M.'

MR. Mather's 'representation of some other gospel doctrines,' is founded wholly on the account he gives of SELF-LOVE. If what he says of this is true, he has indeed made some new discoveries; upon which he has built a system of doctrines. He says, as self-love is essential to man, as a moral agent, Adam was possessed of it in a state of perfect holiness; and he had this same self-love when he had turned rebel against God. And as God was now become his enemy, and all the divine perfections were against him, and stood engaged to destroy him, to love God in this situation, would be the same with loving his own misery, and total destruction: Which being contrary to his self-love, which God had implanted in him, it was naturally impossible he should love God. Nor was it his duty to love him, in these circumstances, as it was not only impossible, but contrary to the divine command; for he was commanded to love himself.

And

'And all Adam's posterity are in much the same state he was in after the fall; so that it is neither possible for them, nor their duty, to love God, until they understand and believe the gospel, which sets the divine character in a new light, and opposite to that in which it appears in the law, and declares his love and kindness to them. This discovery and belief, will reconcile their hearts to God, so that they cannot but love him, and embrace the gospel from this same principle of self-love, from which, they, before this, necessarily hated God; and therefore need no new principle in their hearts, in order to turn to God, and become real christians. * All this Mr. H. thinks he has demonstrated, by the help of *self-love*, using the word without any fixed, determinate meaning, and in different senses.

When he says self-love is essential to man, as a moral agent, he means a general love of happiness. But when he infers from this, that Adam's self-love, after he had sinned, rendered it impossible for him to love God, he means quite a different thing by self-love, viz. selfishness, which is most properly called self-love. Nothing is therefore necessary, in order to see the futility of all he says on this head, but to attend to what has been said on this subject, in the preceding inquiry. p. 19.—26.

When Adam saw himself condemned by the law of God, & all the divine perfections were against him, had he been a benevolent friend to the greatest good of the whole, he

* Mr. M. does not expressly say it is the duty of men to *hate* God, before they believe the report of the gospel; but this is necessarily implied in what he says: For the same self-love which renders it impossible to love God, renders it equally impossible not to hate him, while he is considered as disposed to destroy them. And if we are commanded to exercise this self-love, which is opposed to God, this is the same with being commanded to oppose and hate him! Mr. M. thinks he has proved this self-love is commanded, from the words of the command, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour *as thyself*.' This argument has been confuted in the preceding inquiry. See p. 25, 26.

opposition to God's character and government. Mr. M. says this is impossible, as 'tis contrary to self-love; that human nature is not capable of acting such a part; as this would be disinterested malice; yea more, 'such a fixed, inveterate malice, as overcomes all regard to his own happiness in the sinner's heart.' (p. 15.)

Ans. Upon the principle on which Mr. Mather opposes me here, the sinner always heartily complies with what his judgment and conscience are convinced is for his interest: For if his heart may, in any instance, refuse to embrace what he is convinced in his conscience would be for his interest to embrace, he may do so in any instance, even in the instance before us. And all Mr. M. says is against the former, as much as the latter.—But that the former is true, none will deny. Is there no instance, in our world, of a person's refusing to comply with what he was convinced, in his conscience, was his duty, and for his own interest? Are there not innumerable instances of this every day? Yea, have we not all a witness in our own breasts, that our hearts, in many instances, have not conformed to the dictates of our consciences; but have refused to love and embrace that which we have been convinced in our consciences, would be for our highest interest to love and embrace? Mr. M. is not such a stranger to mankind, and to himself, as to be insensible of this, I conclude. And if a man's heart may oppose his conscience telling him what is most for his interest in one instance, it may in another, and in any supposable case whatsoever. Does Mr. M. think that nothing is necessary, in order to the conversion of a sinner, but to convince his judgment and conscience, that 'tis for his interest to embrace the gospel? And that all who have this conviction are certainly converted and saved? Surely he does not. Why then has he supposed it in his opposition to the proposition under consideration?

And when a sinner's heart exercises itself, as in the case before us, it supposes no disinterested malice, or any thing
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contrary to the greatest degree of self-love : Yea, 'tis purely from self-love, and because his heart is under the dominion of this, that he thus opposes the dictates of his conscience, and hates God, his law and government, Jesus Christ and the gospel : And that because all these are contrary to self-love. The sinner's heart must cease from loving himself wholly, and love God supremely, and exercise that benevolence which loves and seeks the glory of God and the general good, in order to be willing to embrace the gospel. This the selfish or unregenerate heart is fixed in opposition to ; and the more clear conviction he has in his conscience, that 'tis for his interest to love God, &c. and the more his conscience is convinced of the truths respecting the divine character, the nature and true import of the gospel ; the more fully will he find these things to be contrary to his heart, or his selfishness ; and consequently the more strong and vigorous will be the opposition of his heart to them.

The pride of a man's heart may oppose true humility, and be the only reason of his obstinately refusing to submit to it ; while under a conviction of conscience, that to be humble is the only way to be truly happy and honorable. The pride of a man's heart, which, at bottom, is nothing but selfishness, seeks honor and happiness which are not the honor and happiness that attend humility ; but of a different and opposite kind : And his being convinced in conscience, that in opposing humility he opposes the greatest good, will not alter the taste and bent of his heart, or render the honor and happiness that attend humility any more agreeable to his pride, than they were before. The proud heart will oppose humility at all times, and under all imaginable convictions of conscience. So the selfish heart will oppose benevolence, and every thing that implies it, whatever conviction of conscience there may be, that selfishness is the source of continual misery, and that the benevolent are only happy. You may convince the conscience of the covetous miser, that 'tis his duty,

duty, and for his interest, to be charitable and liberal ; as with such a disposition he would enjoy himself more, and have more comfort in what he possessed, and hereby lay up immense, eternal riches. But would this certainly make his selfish, covetous heart charitable and liberal ; or do any thing towards it ? It might induce him to give something to the poor ; but so far as he is influenced to this by meer selfishness, it would be as far from charity, and as really opposite to it, as were any of his former exercises. How then, it will be asked, shall this selfish churl become liberal ? *Ans.* Not merely by being convinced, in his judgment, that to be liberal is the only way to become truly rich and happy ; and hence from his selfishness desiring and attempting to be liberal : For all such desires are, by supposition, selfish desires and attempts, and as opposite to liberality as were his former desires and attempts : But by having a new heart given him, a truly benevolent, liberal, bountiful heart.

Mr. M. says (p. 14. marg.) ‘ If the enmity of our hearts is really a principle of *disinterested malice*, it must be owned, that the more it is opposed by the light, and convictions of conscience, it will work in our hearts after the manner here described ;’ [i. e. the more light and conviction the conscience has, the higher will the fixed hatred and opposition of the heart rise against God] and he grants that, on this supposition, ‘ no light and conviction of conscience can humble, subdue and convert, the heart :’ And ‘ that therefore regeneration is the effect of mere and immediate divine power.’

I am as confident as Mr. M. or any one else can be, that there is no such thing in nature, as *disinterested malice*. And if it can be made to appear that any thing I have asserted concerning the unregenerate, implies any such thing, I am ready to retract it. All sinful exercises are interested and selfish : All sin consists in self-love, and those affections that are implied in it, and flow from it. There is properly no disinterested affection but that in which holi-

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ness consists. This has been proved in the foregoing inquiry.

And why is not the exertion of mere and immediate power, as necessary to subdue the heart which is under the power of this selfishness, as if it was full of disinterested malice? And how will conviction of conscience remove the former, and turn it into benevolence, any more than the latter? I believe none can give any reason for this. I think therefore Mr. M. has really granted the whole I have asserted, by his concession under consideration. Selfishness is as opposite to holiness, or disinterested benevolence, in its whole nature, and all its exercises, as disinterested malice could be, if any such thing were possible: And the former is as strong and fixed a principle as the latter could be. Let any one give a good reason why disinterested malice, were this possible, might not be removed by light, or conviction of conscience, and that mere and immediate divine power is necessary to subdue and convert such a heart, and it will be as good a reason why all this must be true of a heart wholly under the dominion of that self-love which is most opposite to holiness of any thing in nature, and indeed the only thing in the heart that can oppose it.

This brings the matter in dispute to a point; and may lead us to see what is the ground of our difference on this head. It has its foundation in different notions of the nature of true holiness, and so, of God's moral character, which is the sum, and pattern of all true holiness. If the true scriptural holiness has been described in the foregoing inquiry, then all must grant, that what I have advanced about the state and character of the unregenerate, and the necessity of 'mere and immediate divine power,' to change the sinner's heart, must be true, & agreeable to scripture. Mr. Hart acknowledges this (p. 23. marg.) and Mr. M. implicitly acknowledges it in the passage now under consideration. The truth is, if holiness consists, in whole, or in part, in selfishness, or if this
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is in any degree friendly to true holiness, and does not oppose it ; then he who has all possible depravity, may be recovered to holiness, without any immediate, divine power exerted to change his heart : Nothing is needful in order to this, but to have his conscience enlightened to see what holiness is, how agreeable it is to his selfishness, and suited to gratify it ; and what kindness and wonderful love God exercises towards him ; which is suited to affect & win his selfish heart, and draw forth strong exercises of love to them that love him ; while God requires nothing of him that is not perfectly agreeable to self-love ; I say, on this supposition, nothing is needful in order to conversion, but that light and conviction of conscience, which shall bring these things into clear view.

But then it must be observed, such a conversion is really no change of heart at all, 'tis supposed that the perfectly selfish heart is disposed to love God and holiness, and embrace the gospel, whenever they are truly and properly set before it ; and love to God and holiness, and embracing the gospel, are nothing but selfishness exercised toward these things : And all religion and holiness is nothing but self-love, and what springs from this root : And that disinterested affection, which has been spoken of, as opposite to selfishness, and as that in which all true holiness consists, is no part of holiness ; but a mere chimaera, being as contrary and impossible to human nature, as disinterested malice. Here lies the great difference between us, even in our different and opposite notions of the nature of holiness, and of the divine, moral character. If we were agreed in this, we should be agreed in our notions about total depravity ; the state and character of the unregenerate, regeneration, &c. Mr. M. makes the total depravity of fallen man, *primarily* and *radically*, to consist in his incapacity of loving God, because this was in that state, contrary to self-love, together with the darkness that was on his mind. But this cannot properly be called depravity, as it is not in the least degree sinful ;

ful ; it being naturally impossible, and so not his duty to love God in these circumstances. But if it were allowed to be sinful depravity in some degree, it can't be *total depravity*, according to Mr. M. for this his self-love was a good thing, even a duty which was commanded in the divine law ; and it was ready to flow out in love to God, whenever he should be revealed in a truly amiable light, even as the kind favour of sinners. According to this, self-love is itself holiness, and that in which it radically and summarily consists.

I have said (sermon on regen. p. 42. marg.) that the doctrines of the total corruption of man, and regeneration by light in the understanding, were inconsistent with each other. And no one has yet proved the contrary : But the evidence of the truth of this assertion rather increases, in that all who undertake to vindicate this notion of regeneration do, in order to do it, really deny total depravity. If self-love is so friendly to holiness, and such an essential ingredient in it, that when the conscience is properly enlightened, this same self-love, will grow up, and act out, in all the branches of holy love ; then man is not totally depraved ; for he has this good principle in him, which being cultivated will grow up into all holiness. But if self-love is, in every degree of it, opposed to holiness, and that in which human depravity consists, and fallen man is wholly under the power of this ; and the more strongly this is exerted, the more he opposes God and holiness ; then no degree of light and conviction of conscience will change his heart, or produce new and opposite principles there : But the more light and conviction is in the conscience, the more clearly the hateful object, holiness, is set before the mind ; the more directly and vigorously will self-love hate and oppose it. This all will grant, on the supposition made. So that the dispute really is, whether man is totally depraved ; and what true holiness is : Whether it is opposed to selfishness ; or whether selfishness itself, is not friendly to it ?

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The dispute therefore is to be determined by determining what true holiness is. If the foregoing is a true and scriptural account of it, the controversy is decided, by the confession of all. I hope therefore in all disputes on this head, for the future, that which at bottom is in question, will be kept in view, viz. What is holiness? What is the divine character? What is God?—If we can be agreed in this, we shall agree in all the rest.

Mr. M. says (p. 14. marg.) ‘But Solomon did not apprehend that natural corruption would rise the higher, the more it is opposed (Prov. xx. 15) *Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.*—If then this corruption does not necessarily rise the higher, the more it is opposed, but does sometimes yield; why may we not suppose that the father of our spirits, through light, powerfully impressed on the conscience by the holy spirit, may obtain a more complete victory over this corruption, than ever is obtained by human correction; even so as that it may be truly mortified?’

In answer to this it may be observed, if these words prove any thing against the doctrines I have advanced, they prove too much; more than Mr. M. himself will grant; or can be true, consistent with the whole current of scripture. If foolishness means natural corruption in general, and the rod of correction will drive it *far from him*; then it is overcome and mortified; and there is no need of any thing else, in order to effect it, or to obtain a more complete victory over this corruption, than is obtained by the rod of correction. If the rod of correction will remove, and subdue this corruption in any degree, no reason can be given why it may not wholly remove and subdue it. Therefore, the consequence from the words is this, ‘If then the natural corruption of the heart does yield and will submit under the discipline of the rod, why may we not suppose, yea, be certain, that the rod of correction, properly and powerfully applied, will ob-

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tain a complete victory over it?' If this reasoning is not just, neither is Mr. Mather's.

These words may be taken in three different senses ; and let which will be the right, neither of them are to Mr. Mather's purpose.

1. By the rod of correction, may be meant the whole of parental discipline and education. This, when wisely and faithfully administered and practised, may, by divine constitution and promise, be connected with the deliverance of the child from sin ; so that God's blessing and his giving a new heart to a child, is the certain attendant or fruit of such education and discipline. In this sense the words in the 6th verse of this chap. may be understood, 'Train up a child in the way he should go ; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.' And agreeable to this, it is expressly said (chap. xxiii. 13, 14.) 'Withhold not correction from the child. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.' If God has promised to the child which is faithfully and wisely educated, under parental discipline, and brought up *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, deliverance from sin and hell ; this does not determine any thing about the manner in which God effects this, whether he gives a new heart by light, or immediate divine influence. And it is consistent with the child's being more perverse, and his corruption rising higher and growing stronger under discipline, if God's blessing should be withheld.

2. If these words, with the others just mentioned, only import, that this is a proper means, and the likeliest way to turn a child from sin, and promote his salvation, they determine nothing with regard to the matter in dispute.

3. If by *foolishness* is here meant, not corruption of heart in general, but those particular exercises and out-breakings of it, in which children are stubborn and rebellious, and impatient of restraint ; by which they shew their folly, and render themselves disagreeable and trou-

blesome to all who have any special connexion with them : Children may, by a wise parental government, be cured of this folly ; it may be driven far from them, and they, as to their external appearance and conduct, be quite different from those who have no education, or a bad one. The many examples of this are sufficient to confirm this observation. But this discipline, by which children are thus formed, does not eradicate or subdue the corrupt principles of their hearts. The corruption of their hearts is restrained from acting out in that particular way, and is turned into some other channel ; and may act with as much strength another way, and more. It will do so, unless the heart be renewed by the spirit of God.

Mr. M. here refers to president Edwards's book on freedom of will, and says, ' The whole design of that book is to prove, that *the will is as the greatest apparent good is*. All the arguments there offered, must be confuted, before this character here given of the sinner can be established.' P. 13.

Ans. President Edwards does not attempt to prove, nor say, that the will always is, according to the conviction and dictates of the judgment and conscience, with respect to what is best, and most for a person's interest : But he says directly the contrary, p. 12. And the whole that he says in shewing that the will is as the greatest apparent good, shews that he does not mean the appearance that is made to the judgment and conscience only ; but to ' the whole faculty of perception or apprehension, and not merely what is called *reason* or *judgment*.' He supposes the heart may be such as to resist the clearest dictates of conscience ; so that what this dictates to be most for his interest, shall not be the greatest apparent good ; but something directly opposite. If president Edwards had said any thing inconsistent with this, it would be contrary to known fact and universal experience.

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the greatest apparent good, and not what reason and conscience dictate. Therefore, to such an heart, *that* is always the greatest apparent good, which opposes universal, disinterested benevolence. If selfishness is agreeable to itself, and a selfish good is to this the greatest apparent good; then this benevolence is disagreeable, and it opposes and hates this and the highest good which it seeks, as the greatest evil. Mr. M. speaking of Adam in his fallen state says, 'He having now a separate interest from God, there was of course contrariety to the divine character, so far forth as that stood in opposition to his own separate interest.' P. 15. The selfish man always has a separate interest from God. This is the very nature of self-love, it consists in setting up a separate interest from God; and therefore is of course, in its nature, contrariety & enmity to the divine character; for this always did, and always will stand in direct opposition to the separate interest of a selfish man. And this separate interest will be the greatest apparent good to selfishness, whatever reason and conscience may dictate to the contrary.

Mr. M. thinks the doctrines about regeneration, &c. which he is opposing, originated from what president Edwards has advanced in his treatise on religious affections; where he represents holiness and the exercises of it, as something of a different nature from any thing that takes place in unholy men; and says that in these holy exercises and affections, 'there is a new inward perception or sensation of the minds of holy persons, entirely different, in its nature and kind, from any thing that ever their minds were the subjects of before they were sanctified;' which he calls 'a new spiritual sense.' P. 35, &c. This, Mr. M. thinks, is a great error, and of a very bad tendency; it being the source of a set of doctrines, which he calls '*new divinity*,' which says he, 'are surprisngly spread in the land, in the present day.' P. 36, &c.

No wonder Mr. M. objects against this, seeing if it is true, it overthrows all his divinity at once. According to
him

him, the same self-love which in unholy men is inconsistent with their loving God, and leads them to hate and oppose him, is a principle of holiness in the saints; and is really exercised in true love to God, when their eyes are opened to see that his character is favourable to their own dear selves; and that they had been under a sad mistake all their days before: So that holiness does not differ, in nature and kind, from unholiness or sin. But if holiness consists in benevolence, and the affection implied in it, and this is in its nature different from selfishness, and opposed to it, what Mr. Edwards says of holy affections must be true. So that we still see the dispute is about the nature of holiness, or what is God's moral character. If we were agreed about this, it would end the controversy.

Mr. M. makes three objections against Mr. Edwards's doctrine on this head.

First. He says, 'If regeneration is such a change as is here described, it is evidently not a moral, but a *physical change.*' His argument is this: Giving this new, spiritual sense or taste, is the same with giving a new bodily sense, or opening the eyes of the blind; but this would be a physical change; therefore the giving this taste is a physical change.

Ans. 1. The scriptures, speaking of this change, represent it by giving eyes to see, a being turned from darkness to marvellous light, giving a new heart, the new creature, or new creation; a being raised from death to life, &c. These expressions as strongly import a physical change as does Mr. Edwards's description of it, and are therefore as liable to Mr. M's objection. Mr. M. thought of this, and said, 'I am sensible that very *strong* expressions are used in the scripture about this change; it is styled a *new creation*, &c. but if regeneration is no other than a moral change, then those strong scripture expressions will not warrant us to describe it as a physical change.' P. 40. These scripture expressions are full

as strong as Mr. Edwards's : What warrant then had Mr. M. to say *his* import a physical change, when he owns he has none to put such a construction on the scripture ? He has not offered a word to shew why Mr. Edwards's description of this change does make it a physical change, which will not equally prove that the description of it in scripture makes it so.

Ans. 2. What does Mr. M. mean by a *physical change* ? I think he has not sufficiently explained himself. Mr. Edwards expressly says he does not mean, by his new, spiritual sense or taste, any thing which implies any new natural faculties of the soul, of understanding and will ; but that it consists in a new disposition of the same will, or affection of heart. And if this is not a moral change, and nothing else, let Mr. M. shew why it is not, and tell what a moral change is, and what he means by it. A moral change is a change of the heart or will, in which it is disposed to hate what it before loved, and to love and chuse those objects to which it before had an aversion, with a new kind of sensation or love, which it never had before. And will not Mr. Mather allow that men pass a change like this in regeneration and conversion ? A physical change is a change of the natural faculties of the soul, or giving new natural faculties : But this is no more implied in the change Mr. E. describes, than in that which Mr. M. supposes takes place in regeneration. And Mr. E. expressly declares he does not mean any such thing.

Mr. M. says, ' If God should give sight to one that was born blind, we should readily agree that the change wrought in him was physical, and not a moral change : And it is equally evident, that it is a real physical change which is here described by Mr. Edwards. And to describe regeneration as a proper physical change, and then say, *we don't mean so*, is only to bewilder ourselves and our readers about that important change.' P. 39. It appears that Mr. M. has bewildered himself by

by not sufficiently attending to the matter, and not distinguishing between a change of the heart, in which a new inclination takes place there, which was not there before, and that change in which a new natural faculty is given, in which the heart is not in the least concerned. This appears by the instance he brings. He has bewildered himself in not distinguishing between a spiritual sense, which consists in the disposition or affection of the heart, and our bodily senses. If a man who has always been wholly contracted and selfish in all his views, designs and pursuits, becomes benevolent and generous, in a hearty love of God and his neighbour, placing all his happiness in the glory of God, and the greatest good of the creation, he is turned from darkness to marvellous light, and has a set of sensations that are quite new, and opposite to any thing he had before. But is this therefore a physical change? It is altogether of a moral kind, if there is any such thing as moral change. Now this is the change Mr. Edwards describes.

Ans. 3. Mr. M's regeneration has much more of the appearance of a physical change, than that which Mr. Edwards describes, and will be found to be really such, I believe, if examined. He supposes the change, as wrought by God, to be wholly in the understanding, considered as distinct from the will, and to consist in giving a new set of ideas, in which the will or heart is not concerned, and which could not take place, however well disposed the heart is, as they are entirely independent of any disposition of heart. Now this is no more a moral change than any other change whatsoever.

Secondly. Mr. M. says, 'If regeneration is such a physical change, the sinner is so far from being to blame for his continuing in an unregenerate state, that he is wholly excused from all blame. P. 39.

Ans. 1. This is granted, *if* regeneration is a physical change, i. e. is a change not of the disposition of heart, but of something else independent of this. But Mr. Ed-

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wards describes no such change, but only a change of heart, which consists wholly in new sensations and affections, in which it turns from sin to God.

Ans. 2. This objection is made with an ill grace by Mr. M. For though it is groundless, as made against Mr. Edwards, it lies with full force against himself, and all who hold that men are regenerated by light, and not by giving a new taste and disposition of heart.—For, according to them the difficulty of the sinner's forsaking sin, and turning to God, does not properly lie in the heart or will; but in the understanding, which being blinded, does not see divine objects in a true light. This is the only cause of their continuing unregenerate; and not any thing wrong or blamable in the will. The fault is wholly in the understanding; and this is a blameless fault or defect, for the will or heart has no hand in it; and can no more help or remove it, however well inclined, than a blind man can restore himself to sight. All that hold to regeneration by light, without any immediate divine influence on the will, may be challenged to shew how men are wholly to blame for continuing in a state of unregeneracy, or that this is any crime at all. They never can do it: Nor can they tell how this is consistent with total depravity; for this is always implicitly, if not expressly, denied, in all they say in vindication of their scheme.

But Mr. M. has gone beyond all others on this head, and expressly declared that Adam was, in his fallen state, under a natural impossibility of loving God, and that his total depravity, which is the same with a state of unregeneracy, primarily and radically consisted in this, together with the darkness that was upon his mind: And that this is the case with his posterity. How then can they be to blame for continuing in this state, which is wholly owing to their external circumstances, and a natural impossibility they are under of being otherwise? And yet this same Mr. M. thinks it is a sufficient objection against

against Mr. Edwards's scheme, if it is inconsistent with sinners being to blame for continuing in a state of unregeneracy !

Thirdly. Mr. M. says, ' If regeneration is such a *physical change*, it will follow that every regenerate person must have the most certain knowledge of it.' P. 39.

Ans. It is not a physical change. But if it were, why must the subjects of it be more certain of the change, than if it were a moral change ? The exercises and affections of the heart are as perceptible, as any thing that can take place in the mind. And when, in this respect, all old things are passed away, and all things are become new, and a person is called out of darkness into marvellous light ; this change is in its own nature as perceptible, and the subject may be as sure of it, if called moral, as if it were called physical ; and it's being really a moral or physical change, alters nor the case with respect to the evidence or certain knowledge of it.

The only reason that can be given why every person that is possessed of real holiness (let him come by it how he will, and whatever may be the change that brought him to it) has not the certain knowledge of it, is, that he has so small a degree of it, and is no more changed, and conformed to God ; and so much darkness and sin still remain in his heart. — But it is needless to spend time to answer such an objection : It is not easy to say by what means it was suggested to Mr. Mather, and why he thought it worthy to be inserted.



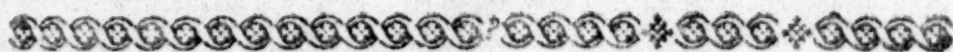
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APPENDIX.

NUMBER III.

An Answer to the Rev. Mr. Hemmenway's "Vindication of the power, obligation and encouragement of the unregenerate to attend the means of grace.--- Against the exceptions of the Rev. Mr. Samuel Hopkins."



INTRODUCTION.

IN my reply to Mr. Mills, I had occasion to consider the duties of the unregenerate, which he spoke so much of, as required of them, and performed by them, while unholy and under the dominion of sin. And I undertook to prove that such *do not do any duty*, or comply with any of the commands which God hath given to men. Mr. Hemmenway had, not long before, published seven sermons, which were designed to prove and inculcate the contrary doctrine; and were wholly confuted, if I had proved the point I had advanced. This was probably the occasion of his more particularly attending to what I had said in this part of my reply, and undertaking to write against me.

As I am far from being convinced that what he pleads for is agreeable to divine revelation, and look upon it of a very hurtful tendency ; I have undertaken an answer. It is thrown into the form of an appendix to the foregoing inquiry, becaufe what is there said, is, in my opinion, a full answer to the leading sentiments and fundamental principle in his piece ; so that, by refering to that, the answer may be much shortened.

After having observed that I had not given a right representation of the question in dispute, he proceeds to state it in the following words : * *Whether any actions which men do, or can perform, while unregenerate, are required of them in and by a divine command ?* He asserts and undertakes to prove the affirmative of this question ; and has wrote a book upon it of two hundred and twenty-seven pages. If I was to state the question in my own words, I should say, it was, *Whether the unregenerate do any duty which God has commanded ?* But as Mr. H—y appears to mean nothing different from this, by the words he has used, and to understand the real matter in dispute between us ; I shall make no exceptions against his state of the question ; but proceed to consider his vindication. †

SECT.

* Though Mr. H—y did not choose to dispute the question as I stated it, I yet believe it was stated agreeable to the sense of most of those who have asserted that duties are prescribed in the word of God, to be done by those who are in a state of unregeneracy. And it will, I believe, appear to be his own sense of the matter before we have done. But I think it not worth while to enter into a dispute about this, since he owns 'the whole drift of my reasoning is to oppose and confute' the affirmative of the question, as he has stated it, p. 5.

† I have an objection against the title he has given his book, viz. *A vindication of the power, obligation and encouragement of the unregenerate to attend the means of grace, against the exceptions of the Rev. Mr. Hopkins.* This is not a just title, as it does not tend to give the reader, who casts his eye upon it, a right idea of the matter in dispute ; but will unavoidably deceive him, if he knows no more about it than what is said here, for it is really contrary to the truth. I have not made any exceptions against the power, obligations and encouragement of the unregenerate to attend the means of grace, that

know



S E C T I O N I.

The point in controversy more particularly stated : The method Mr. H——y takes to support his cause : Its weakness and fallacy shewn.

MR. H——y agrees with me, that the divine commands require holiness, and nothing but holiness ; or ‘ nothing but what is some way included in holiness.’ P. 3. And we are agreed that the unregenerate are wholly destitute of holiness, and that all their exercises and actions are unholy. I supposed the plain and undeniable consequence from these premises was, that they do not obey the divine commands, or do their duty in any degree. Mr. H——y denies this to be a just consequence ; and says, ‘ though no actions of the unregenerate are so fully conformable to the divine command, as that they can be denominated holy in the least degree ;—yet some actions are conformable to the divine command, in some respects, and therefore comprehended in the requirement of it.’ P. 4. To vindicate this, and answer what has been said in opposition to it, is the professed design of his book.

In order to this, he particularly considers the nature of true holiness, and what is included in this. He says, holiness is a very complex thing, containing many parts ; all which are necessary to make up that compound holiness. Therefore, the commands which require holiness,

require know of, but held to all this, as fully as he does. And I think more fully : For he does not pretend they have power to do this in the manner he contends for, unless they have the assistance of the spirit of God : Whereas I suppose the *secure sinner* has this power. And he acknowledges I grant, they have *encouragement* to attend on means, and that he has no dispute with me about this, p. 3. So far therefore as his book is to the purpose, the title is a very improper one, if not injurious.

require every part which is involved in the whole. That the unregenerate may do some of the things contained in this compound, and so far obey the command requiring holiness; though it being but a part, such doings, being so defective, have no degree of true holiness; yet in doing this, they do their duty, and so far obey the divine command.

To prove that there are some parts of duty and holiness which the unregenerate may perform, and yet be unholy, he divides holiness into principle, end, manner and matter. § All those, he says, are required, and necessary in order to render an action truly holy. And though the unregenerate do nothing from a holy principle, in a holy manner, and to a holy end; yet they may do THE MATTER OF DUTY; and in complying with this part of holiness, they so far obey the command requiring holiness, and do their duty. As the whole dispute now turns upon *the matter of duty*, 'tis necessary we should well understand what is meant by this, in order to judge on which side the truth lies.

Mr. H—y has used this phrase often enough, & said a great deal about *the matter of duty*; but after all (under favour) I must think he has not given a clear, consistent account of it. He says it does not mean external actions, aside from the will producing them; but *the effective acts of the will*, choosing and producing external effects; that by the substance and matter of an action is meant THE ACTION *as abstracted from all its circumstances*, and not any consequent effects distinct from it. P. 40. Matter of external duty, according to him, 'is the act of the will, *ad extra*, productive of an external work, required in the

divine

§ Mr. H—y makes many more distinctions, divisions and subdivisions, in what he says about the nature of holiness, and says a number of things, which appear to me very exceptionable: But as they do not effect the matter in dispute, I shall make no remarks upon them. Let him who understands and approves, avail himself of the edification. Wherein we differ in our accounts of holiness will in some measure appear from the foregoing inquiry.

divine law :? And this action is to be considered *as abstracted from all its circumstances*, viz. principle, motive, design and end.

Upon this I would observe,

1. There is in nature no such effective act of the will, nor can any such thing be conceived of, as 'tis self-contradictory. An act of choice, without any motive or design, is just as impossible, as an act of choice without an act of choice. Therefore we may be sure no such action is commanded, or done by the unregenerate or regenerate.

2. If there could be any such actions, there would be no more duty or any thing of a moral nature in them, than there is in external conduct, considered as abstracted from all acts of choice, or *in themselves considered*. An act of will, abstracted from all motive and design, if any such thing could be, would have no more morality in it, than the wind or fire, producing effects, and would be no more praise-worthy or blamable. Mr. M. is confident that no one 'ever dreamed that the mere motion of matter, separate from the agency of the mind, has any morality in it.' p. 40. We might with as much assurance assert that no man ever dreamed that the *mere motion of the mind*, separate from all motive, design and end, has the least morality in it, had he not furnished us with an instance. He is however, perhaps, the first, and, I hope, will be the last.

But Mr. H—y comes out of the clouds before he has done, and appears sensible that matter of duty done without any motive and design, good or bad, is neither duty nor sin ; and grants that any action done with a bad end is 'materially evil,' that is, not the matter of duty, but the matter of sin. Therefore it was not the matter of duty ; but 'vile treachery in Judas to kiss his Lord, in order to betray him.' p. 91. If the matter of duty was the effective act of the will, abstracted from all circumstances ; then Judas did the mat-
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ter of duty, as much as any one can. But if his end and design cannot be abstracted, but must come into consideration to determine, whether he did the matter of duty or not; and his evil design made it the matter of sin, then a man never does the matter of duty with an evil design, or from a wrong motive. So that the whole comes to this at last. There are certain effective acts of the will producing effects, *ad extra*, which are either good or evil, matter of duty, or matter of sin, according as the end of the agent is either good or bad. This is very agreeable to common sense. When the beloved disciple John kissed his dear Lord, as a sincere expression of love to him, it was a good action, the matter of duty. When Judas kissed him with a traiterous design, it was a vile action, and the matter of sin.

Mr. H—y being sensible of this, notwithstanding all his distinctions about matter of duty, undertakes to shew that the unregenerate may act from a good end; and rests his whole cause on this. He says, though they do not act from the highest and best ends, which men must act from, in order to denominate their actions holy; yet they may act from self-love, which is not forbidden, but an innocent, useful and good principle. Therefore when they do things externally right, from this principle, and seeking their own interest as their end, they so far obey the divine command, and do their duty.

He does not expressly say, that I have observed, that self-love is commanded, and so a duty; but if it is not commanded, and so a duty to act from this end, how can acting from self-love make an action a duty, or the matter of duty,———or what obedience is there in this? I do not find that he has told us.

He has *said* self-love is a natural, innocent & good principle. But I do not find that he has offered any evidence of this; or that there is any thing to support it but his bare assertion. This surely ought not to be taken for granted; since he builds all his opposition to me on this foundation.

foundation. If self-love is not a good or innocent affection, but forbidden and sinful in every degree of it, all his building falls to the ground, and his *matter of duty* done by the unregenerate, turns out to be the matter of sin. This I have endeavoured to make evident in the preceeding inquiry ; and I think I have a right to consider it as a full answer to the whole he has said in proof of the doctrines he has advanced, till it be shewn that I have not given a right account of holiness and self-love. I therefore refer him and the reader to that, hoping it may be the means of such light to him and all who attend to this controversy, as shall put an end to the dispute. *

SECT.

* Mr. H—y's dividing and splitting up holiness into so many parts, in order to find something belonging to it to be duty for the unregenerate to do, has brought to mind the following similitude, which may serve to illustrate it. A certain debtor owed his creditor a thousand dollars ; but instead of paying him the real dollars, which he was able to do at any hour, had he been inclined, he brought to him an equal number of counterfeit dollars, and pleaded he had paid the debt, and answered his obligation, in part at least ; as there are several things in counterfeit dollars, which belong to true dollars, such as external appearance, shape, &c. though they want the most essential thing, and are not true silver. And though he had no regard to his creditor and his interest, yet he acted from the *innocent* principle of self-love, as he did it in hopes that hereby he should escape being cast into prison.

Mr. H—y undertakes to confute a position which he says I ' often lay down, and build much upon it, without once offering any thing in the shape of an argument to prove it : ver. 12. *That the unregenerate act wholly from self-love.*' p. 60, &c. It may be proper to take some notice of this. I grant the unregenerate have appetites and tastes which are not self-love, but quite distinct from it ; such as animal appetites, hunger, thirst, &c. And such are a taste for natural beauty, and what is called natural affection, &c. But these are not of a moral kind ; and therefore man's moral agency does not consist in these ; and if he had no other affections and principles of action, he would be no more a moral agent than the beasts. Therefore when we speak of man's *moral* actions, it is not proper to say he acts merely from these appetites and instincts ; but must find some other principles of action. Mr. H—y says, p. 23, ' By moral actions I mean such as are commanded or forbidden by the divine law.' But these instincts and appetites are neither commanded nor forbidden in the divine law.

Therefore



S E C T I O N II.

Remarks on Mr. Hemmenway's particular arguments to prove his point.

OUR author attempts a particular proof of his positions by *nine* arguments, which are so enlarged as to take up above an hundred pages. I shall not take notice of many particulars in these pages, which I think might

Therefore there is no moral agency in them, in themselves considered. Though these may have influence in moral actions many ways; yet the morality of them does not consist in these, but in universal benevolence, or self-love, one of which is implied in every moral action, and determines it. And in this the moral good or evil of every action wholly consists. For instance, if a man determines to gratify any particular bodily appetite, or not to do it, as a moral agent, he does this in the exercise of self-love, or universal benevolence; and therefore all his moral actions are determined by benevolence or self-love; a regard to others which includes a regard to himself, or that regard to himself only, which is selfishness.

Mr. H—y gives a different account indeed, p. 61—64. He thinks because 'men often, in their actions, follow the impulse of particular instincts or appetites, in opposition to their own interest on the whole; yea, in opposition to what reason declares to be best or most for their happiness, taking in the whole of their duration,' it follows that they not only do not act from self-love in such instances, but directly contrary to its dictates. The fallacy of his argument is easily detected. Self-love never prompts men to that which is on the whole most for their happiness, but to the contrary; and therefore to choose and act contrary to the judgment, and determines men to do that which their reason dictates not to be for their greatest happiness, the whole of their duration considered. Reason may dictate that the only way for a person to be truly happy is to be benevolent, and devoted to the greatest good of the whole.' If any one should hence infer that self-love will influence such a person to seek the general good in a disinterested way; and that not to do this would be to act contrary to self-love, he would argue as well as Mr. H—y does. But I need say nothing to shew the weakness and self contradiction of such an argument. He is led by his way of arguing to the following conclusion, p. 64. 'The disorders and miseries which abound in the world, through the wickedness of men, are perhaps chiefly owing to the inordinate strength of particular appetites and inclinations.'

be easily shewn to be very exceptionable : Nor is there need of a particular answer to such of his arguments as are built wholly on the foundation he has laid, which has

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been

* inclinations, ungoverned by a regard to their own general good.' According to this, self-love is so far from being sin, or tending to it, that the wickedness of men is chiefly owing to the want of self-love, or the weakness of it. And if this took place to a sufficient degree, so as to govern men, there would be very little wickedness among men, if any; even though they had no love to God or their neighbour! How different this account of self-love is from that given in the preceding inquiry, sect. iv. p. 19. &c. every intelligent reader will see; and will judge for himself which is most agreeable to scripture, reason and experience.

Mr. H—y has attempted, by several arguments, to prove that the unregenerate have love to *persons*, distinct from self-love, which may influence them to wish them well, do them good, &c. He says, if the unregenerate act merely from self-love, then we are under no obligations of gratitude to them for any acts of kindness they may do us. 'But this is a consequence not to be endured, which at one stroke cancels all obligations of gratitude to parents, friends and benefactors, for all favours and kindnesses, if they are unregenerate.' P. 66, 67.

Ans. 1. We are under obligations of gratitude to others for the kindness they shew us, so far as there is an *appearance* of kindness, which ought to affect us as such. Where there is an appearance of kindness, we ought to be affected with it as such, unless there be as great and sensible appearance of something to the contrary, or of no kindness intended, sufficient to counterbalance it. And in such a case there is, on the whole, no appearance of kindness. When an unregenerate man shews us kindness, there is commonly a more sensible appearance of kindness than of any thing to the contrary. The act of kindness is generally, if not always, more apparent and certain than his ungeneracy. And if we could be as certain he is unregenerate; yet that this is the character of all the unregenerate; and therefore this is really his character, and he has no real disinterested good will to us; consequently 'tis not really an act of kindness, however kind he may appear to be; we get the evidence of all this by a course of reasoning, and a number of deductions, which cannot affect our minds so much, as the appearance of good will in the kindness shewn; therefore the latter ought to preponderate in our minds, and affect us most, produce & feelings & exercises answerable. Therefore there is in such cases an obligation to gratitude. If Mr. H—y, or any other person, is not satisfied with this solution, let him account for our Saviour's weeping over Jerusalem, in any other way; or the child's being grieved at the pain and trouble of his parent, while he verily believes it will all work for his good; and that he will be unspeakably more happy, on the whole, than he could be without it.

Ans.

been particularly considered in the preceding section, and shewn not to have any sufficient support.

His

Ans. 2d. Let it be remembered, the unregenerate have no true gratitude to benefactors. They are not pleased with disinterested good will, for its own sake. All their gratitude consists in self-love, and a consequent love of those who appear to love them. Whatever obligations they are under to gratitude for disinterested kindness, they never fulfil them, nor are influenced by them, more than if they did not exist.

The regenerate or benevolent are thankful to God for all the benefits they receive by the hands of men: And if they have the most clear and sensible evidence that these act wholly from self-love, they will love them, and do them all the good they can. In this view, the consequence Mr. H—y dreads, does not appear so intolerable.

Mr. H—y further says, 'That love the unregenerate have sometimes to others, cannot possibly be educed from self-love. It is evident that the unregenerate have sometimes such a love to others, as causes them to have a real pleasure in and concern for their welfare, separate from all hopes, or prospects of being benefited by them,' which could not be if they loved others only for their own sakes, or wholly from self-love. He instances in one dying, and yet manifesting concern for the welfare of his friends after he is dead, which can be of no benefit to him. P. 67, 68.

Ans. There is not the least difficulty in accounting for this from self-love. Self-love will lead men to love others and wish them well, for the good *they have done* to them, as well as for the good they expect they will do to them. Therefore this will influence a man to wish well to another who has been, and is now his friend, though, because he is now going out of the world, he does not expect to receive any future benefit from him. Self-love does in a sense unite us to them who love us, and do us good; and leads us, by a necessary association of ideas, to look on them as belonging to us, and as part of ourselves. Hence there is a desire in selfish men, which arises from self-love, to exist after they are dead, in their surviving friend or relations, which they look upon in some sense as themselves. And hence they are disposed to wish & provide for their existence & comfort after they themselves shall be dead, for the same reason they would do this for themselves, if they were to live, viz. from love to themselves.

Mr. H—y says, 'More arguments might be offered to the same purpose.' P. 70. If they are no more to the purpose than those he has mentioned, 'tis to be hoped he will never be at the pains. However, it is to be observed, if he had proved that the unregenerate do not act wholly from self-love, it would answer no end in his dispute with me; for he does not make use of this at all to prove his point, but, as has been observed, does this wholly by self-love. Indeed he

does

His first argument is expressly built wholly on this, p. 104—119. And is sufficiently confuted by observing the unregenerate do not the *matter of duty*, if self-love is not a good thing, but sin; and that so far as men act from this, they act not for a good end, but a bad one, the opposite to which he has not proved, but rather *begged*.—There is one passage, however, in these pages which requires particular attention. P. 116, he says, ‘when he (meaning myself) says, that the unregenerate in attending the externals of religion, do nothing that is their duty, he considers these things as enjoined on men *only on supposition that they are regenerate*, and have a holy love to God: For he says, *they are required only as expressions of love to God*.’ From this he draws four frightful consequences, and says, ‘I could easily go on further, but I forbear. Methinks these consequences are so intolerable

does not pretend that the love to others in the unregenerate, which he contends does not spring from self-love, is more virtuous, or in any respect better than self-love; and says ‘it will not follow from any thing that has been pleaded for, that mankind have naturally a principle of true holiness.’ He will however, be put to difficulty to *prove* this, I believe. If disinterested benevolence to our fellow-men is not of the nature of holiness, and in its nature universal benevolence; and does not imply a friendly regard to God, and supreme love to him, it will be impossible to tell, I believe, what holiness is. Therefore Mr. Edwards, to whom Mr. H—y had reference here, did, with good reason, suppose if it could be made evident that men naturally have disinterested benevolence to others, it must be granted they are naturally virtuous and holy. See his nature of true virtue, chap. iv. Mr. H—y adds, ‘nor does it enervate the proofs of man’s natural depravity from scripture and experience.’ This, with the whole of his scheme, is doubtless inconsistent with man’s *total depravity*, which the scripture asserts; and in this view, is not only false; but of a most destructive tendency. The scripture represents the natural depravity of men, as rendering them *bateful and bating one another*, Tit. iii. 3. and says love and good will to others is of God; and none have this but they who are born of God. 1 Joh. iv. 7. Moreover, the scripture says of men, in their natural state, ‘they are *altogether* become unprofitable, there is none that doth good; no not one.’ Rom. iii. 12. Their ‘mind is enmity against God; is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.’ chap. viii. 7. ‘That *every* imagination of the thoughts of their heart is *only evil continually*.’ Gen. vi. 5.

'ble, that no principle ought to be admitted, from which
'they are fairly deduced. If they can fairly be avoided
'on Mr. H's plan, let it be shewn.' p. 118.

Ans. This is all a misrepresentation. I do not say that the attending on the externals of religion, or any thing else, is enjoined on men, *only on supposition they have a holy love to God.* I say God requires all men to love him with all their hearts; which they do not, unless they express it in all proper ways, in a proper attendance on the externals of religion. This command is absolute, without any supposition that they are regenerate, &c. I say they who have no love to God really do no duty when they attend on the externals of religion. And if they cannot do this without a pretence and profession of doing duty, and of love to God; then his consequences will follow. But till he shall *prove* this, they can be as fairly avoided, and as safely denied, on my plan, as on his own.

His *second* argument is taken from a passage in Mark, parallel to that in Matt. where our Saviour gives a summary of the divine law, from which I thought I had proved, that they who do not love God or their neighbours, do no duty. As what he says here, p. 119—132, is chiefly to obviate and confute the sense in which I understood these words of Christ, I shall leave the particular consideration of this argument to another place. *

Mr. H—y's third argument is taken from Rom. ii.

* I would however just observe, that under this argument, he asserts, & thinks he proves, 'that an attendance on religious ordinances is enjoined on men *by other commands* than those which enjoin holy love.' P. 121, 122, 123. This is a different and contrary strain from that in which he sets out: For, in the beginning of his book, he is ready to allow there is no command that does not require holiness; and says I have stated the question wrong in saying it is, 'Whether there are any commands given to the unregenerate, *which do not require any thing truly holy, but only* require such exercises as have not the nature of true holiness.' see p. 3, 4, 6. But he seems to have forgotten all this now, and asserts the affirmative of this question, and what is directly contrary to what he had granted. For if there are '*other commands* than those which enjoin holy love;' then there are commands which do not enjoin holiness, or any thing truly holy: Since he grants there is nothing truly holy, where there is no holy love.

14. 'For when the Gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves.' Here the Gentiles, whom he concludes all will allow to be unregenerate, are expressly said to do the things contained in the law: Therefore the unregenerate may obey the law and do their duty in some instances.

Ans. 1. If the apostle is speaking of the heathen, the words taken in their connexion will prove that the heathen by, nature, do those things by which they shall be justified. This will suit the gross Pelagians, and they have improved them to this purpose, as Mr. H—y observes; but this will prove too much for him, I conclude. The apostle, in the verse immediately preceding, says *the doers of the law* shall be justified; and then these words came in, *For when the Gentiles do the things contained in the law, that is, are doers of the law.* It would be doing violence to these words to suppose that doing the law, in the former clause means one thing, and doing the things of the law, in the next, which is connected with the former by the illative particle *for*, means quite another thing. Therefore if the doers of the law shall be justified; and the heathen do the law, they shall be justified, and saved, whether they are regenerate, or ever hear of Christ and the gospel, or not. Mr. H—y argues that, since the same word is used in each of these verses, it must mean the same thing; and this, I think, is the most weighty reason he gives against Mr. Glas's sense of the words. § He says 'It ought not to be supposed, without evident reason, that the apostle should immediately use the same word, in effect, to express a meaning intirely diverse.' P. 136. If he does not, he speaks of such a doing of the things contained in the law, which is connected with justification and salvation; for
of

§ Mr. Glas observes that the words in the original, rendered, *do the things of the law*, might more properly be rendered, *do the offices of the law*; i. e. their own consciences dictate to them what is right, and condemn or justify, by which they are a law unto themselves.

of such doings he speaks in the sentence immediately before.

Ans. 2. Some have supposed the apostle is here and in the preceding verses speaking of that doing the things of the law, by which they who did them should live; and is explaining what he afterwards says is the tenor of law. Chap. x. 5. 'For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, that the man which doth those things, shall live by them.' That he speaks of keeping the law in the sense in which the Jews generally understood it, as the way to life; and observes that on this footing the Gentiles stood as fair a chance for life as the Jews, if they were doers of the law, by a patient continuance in well doing. Yea, while such Gentiles were saved, the Jew, who heard the law, and did not keep it, would certainly perish. That he says this only to convince the Jews of their error, without supposing that any one, Jew or Gentile, ever did or will do the things contained in the law, which if a man do, he shall live in them. This sense is much preferable to that which represents the heathen as actually doing those things by which they shall be saved; without any knowledge of Christ and the gospel. But there are objections against this sense, which I stay not now to mention, but proceed to another, which to me is the most natural and easy.

Ans. 3. The apostle is not here speaking of unconverted heathens, but of such doing the things contained in the law as is implied in embracing the gospel, or in the character of a christian, which in the preceding context he calls a *patient continuing in well doing and working good*. And this is agreeable to our saviour's account of the matter, Matt. vii. 21. and on. And St. James describes the true christian in the same manner, Jam. i. 25. 'But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a *doer of the work*, this man shall be blessed in his deed.'

The words following confirm this sense, in which these Gentiles

Gentiles are said to shew the work of the law *written in their hearts*; i. e. discover, by their profession and conduct, the law written on their hearts. But this is spoken of as the character of God's people, as the effect of God's power, and a blessing peculiar to the covenant of grace, Jer. 31. 33. Heb. 8. 10.

The passage under consideration might, consistent with the original, be rendered thus, 'For when the Gentiles, who by nature have not the law, do the things contained in the law.' The word translated *by nature* being used to denote their natural state, by birth and education, by which they are distinguished from the Jews, and not what they did by the force of mere nature. We have an expression parallel to this in the 27 verse, where the same word is used: 'And shall not uncircumcision, *which is by nature*, if it fulfil the law &c.' This phrase means the same with that under consideration, 'the Gentiles who *by nature* are without law.' † And he is here evidently speaking of the same thing; to *fulfil the law* is the same with doing the things contained in the law. And he goes on to shew what this is, to the end of the chapter, viz. that it is nothing merely external, but belongs to the heart. But none will suppose this character belongs to the unconverted Gentiles. He speaks of the same Gentiles in the following parts of this epistle, 'Even us whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles. What shall we say then? That the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness.' chap. ix. 24, 30, see also x. 12, &c. xv. 18.

The Jews were greatly prejudiced against the Gentiles being received as the people of God, without being circumcised, and becoming Jews by submitting to their law in every particular. They said to the Gentiles, 'Except ye be circumcised, after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be

† When St. Paul distinguishes the Jews from the Gentiles, he uses the same word. 'We who are Jews *by nature*.' Gal. ii. 15. In opposition to this, the Gentiles were *by nature* distinguished from the Jews.

be saved, that it was needful to circumcise them, & to command them to keep the law of Moses.' Act. xv. 1, 5. The apostles themselves had the same prejudices at first. And when Peter came to understand the truth, he said, 'Of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. Act. x. 34, 38. This is the truth Paul is vindicating in this chapter, and labouring to convince and confute the opposing Jews. This might be more fully shewn, had I room.

It will perhaps be objected, that the last clause of the verse seems inconsistent with the Gentiles here spoken of being christians: 'These having not the law, are a law unto themselves.' Gentile converts had the law as much as the Jews.

Ans. They had not the law in the sense in which the Jews had it. It was not given to them as it was to the Jews; nor in this sense binding on them. Therefore in the sense in which the Jew had the law, as a Jew, the Gentile had it not, but was without law, and continued so, after he was converted to christianity. And by voluntarily improving the revelation of the moral law, made to the Jews, being approved by his own reason and conscience, for his own instruction, conviction and practice, he was a law unto himself. This sense of the words has been mentioned by Augustin and others, as may be seen in *Poli Syn. in loc.* Though Mr. H—y thought not fit to take any notice of it. This sense is consistent with the whole bible, and particularly with it's being said of all men by nature, chap. iii. verse 12. 'There is none that doth good, no not one,' which cannot be easily reconciled with their doing *by nature* the things contained in the law; and being such *doers of the law* as shall be justified. Mr. H—y must prove this cannot be the sense of the text, before his argument from it will be of any service to him.

His three next arguments; viz. from its being said of Herod, that when he heard John, *he did many things*, Mark

vi.

vi. 20. From Paul's exhorting the christians at Philippi to practise whatever things are true, honest, &c. Phil. iv. 8. And 'from divers testimonies from the Old Testament, manifesting God's *approbation* or favorable notice of the actions of unsanctified men, when for the substance conformable to his will,' are not so different as to require a distinct answer to each of them.

The general answer is, Whatever men do from an evil principle, or for a forbidden end, is not duty in any sense; but sin. 'No man may do any acts of religious obedience for such ends as are simply and absolutely unlawful. Such sacrifices are in a peculiar sense an abomination to the Lord.' * Mr. H—y grants the unregenerate act from no higher or better principle than self-love, and have no better end than this sets up. But this is a sinful principle, and always pursues a wrong and bad end. Consequently such really do no duty. Therefore if he cannot prove that self-love is an innocent and good affection, there must be some fallacy in all his arguments from these scriptures, or any others in favour of the unregenerate doing any part of their duty; especially their doing that which is worthy of *God's approbation and favourable notice*.

It is said that Herod *did many things*; but not that he did any duty, or one thing, as John directed him to do it. John directed him to repent, and express his repentance by acts of righteousness and mercy; and if he had two coats, to give one to him that had none. Luk. iii. 8—14. If Herod gave a coat to the poor from self-love, he acted from no better principle or higher end than he did in depriving his brother of his wife, and ordering John to be put to death. Selfishness and pride governed him in the former, as well as in the latter. He was the same man, acted from the same principle, and had the same end in view, in each of these actions.

His argument from Paul's directing Christians to practise whatsoever things are true, &c. is indeed somewhat remarkable. He says, 'I have not cited it because

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* Hemmenway's serm. p. 51.

straitned for proofs.' P. 139. None will imagine he can be *straitned* for proofs, who thinks this text to be one: Every command in the bible might be as 'pertinently cited' as this. Christ's command to his disciples, 'Bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you,' is full as pertinent; for the unregenerate can do this, so far as it consists in externals, as well as speak the truth, and do whatsoever things are lovely. And indeed this implies what our Saviour enjoins; for a kind behaviour towards our enemies is one of these lovely things. But I believe Mr. H—y will not say that they whose character is, *bating one another*, hating those that hate them, do ever bless their enemies, according to the command of Christ. For when they bless with their mouth, their heart is full of cursing & bitterness. And he insists, as has been observed, that whatever is done for a bad end, is not duty. Men may bless their enemies to gratify their ill will against them: But this is not doing the matter of duty, he grants. And they who bless them from no higher principle than self-love, always do it from ill will; for self-love is always and necessarily ill will to enemies. In a word, Mr. H—y's argument from this text takes its fair appearance wholly from a gingle of words; and a supposition that the unregenerate may speak the truth not for a bad, but a good, end, which he has not yet proved.

The truth of the matter is plainly this. There are certain external actions in words and conduct, which are the fruit of volition, or an expression of the heart, acting out in these ways. Such of these as are the proper expression of love to God and our neighbour, or universal benevolence, are put for the whole; the external sign or effect, which alone is seen by men, is mentioned and spoken of as including the whole. Therefore these are mentioned in the command, and are commanded, as comprehending the whole. And when these effects are produced by men, they are said to do the things that were commanded, the whole.

whole being implied, unless there be an express exception. Therefore when only something external is mentioned in the command, and this is complied with and done, men are said to do as they are commanded in scripture, and in common language among men, where none imagine that nothing is intended, but the external thing which is mentioned. This I take to be a full solution of all the seeming difficulty in all the passages of scripture Mr. H—y mentions, or that can be found, where only external actions are mentioned in the command, and men are said to do as they were commanded, when they did the external thing mentioned in the command. Mr. H—y supposes the effective act of the will is implied, when only something external is mentioned; and we have as good authority to say the motives and design of the agent are implied; for these are as essential to every effective act of the will, as is this effective act, to the external effect; and more so; for the external effect may take place where there is no act of the will, whereas there can be no effective act of the will without motive and design.

The whole therefore comes to this: There are certain external things which are the proper expression of love to God and our neighbour, and by which the greatest good of the whole is promoted. These are therefore commanded. § And when the command is complied with, and the external thing is done with a right view and design, i. e. with a disposition to promote the general good,
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§ Our author says, p. 48. ‘The highest good of the universe is the original reason and foundation of the divine law.’ This therefore must be the design of every particular command. And when any particular external action is commanded, it is supposed it must be done with a design to answer this end, which is the great end of all laws. And if the external action mentioned in the command is done with a contrary view and design, there is no obedience to the command, but it is nothing but disobedience. But this is true of all who act wholly from self-love. No affection but universal benevolence agrees to the highest good of the universe. Self-love does always necessarily oppose it. Therefore he does not obey any command, who has no universal benevolence. See the preceding inquiry.

it is matter of duty : But if it be done with a bad design, and from a contrary motive, viz. to set up self in opposition to the general good ; it is not matter of duty, but matter of sin.

With respect to what is said of God's manifesting his approbation of the doings of wicked men, and taking a favourable notice of them, out of respect to what they did, in the case of Ahab, Jehu, &c. I said in my reply to Mr. Mills, God did not conduct in these instances, as a searcher of hearts, but in what he said of them, and his conduct towards them, had respect to their present external appearance, profession and conduct, i. e. as if they really were what they professed to be, true penitents, &c.

Mr. H—y demands 'direct and positive scripture evidence of this hypothesis ;' and says, 'Of this, according to my best observation, his book affords nothing.' *Ans.* I mentioned two passages of scripture, *Isai. lxiii. 8—10.* *Psal. lxxviii. 36.* which I thought amounted to a full proof of this. How this paragraph came to escape his observation I can't tell :—If he *observed it*, and saw it was not to the purpose, why was he not so kind as to help our ignorance ? He adds, 'Nor has he told us how it could properly be said of any one, without any respect to his heart, that his *heart* was or was not perfect, upright, &c. when his behaviour was externally right.'

Ans. There is no such instance. It is said of Amaziah that he did that which was right ; but not with a perfect heart. *2 Chron. xxv. 2.* But this has reference to what appeared in his external conduct. This was not altogether right, and this discovered that his heart was not perfect. This would not have been said of him, if his behaviour had been externally right.

I also said, if God granted favours to Ahab, Jehu, &c. out of respect to their repentance and good deeds, and manifested hereby his approbation of their doings, and took this favourable notice of what they did, and favoured them

them because they did so well, while they were considered as having no connexion with Christ, and enemies to him; then he might bestow the greatest favours on men, out of respect to their own goodness; and consequently they may be justified by the deeds of the law; which overthrows the gospel, and represents Christ as dead in vain.

To this he says, in the first place, God does in fact grant favours to men who are not believers in Christ, and therefore if my position is true, he might grant the greatest favours as well, even eternal salvation, had there been no mediator;—so that according to my way of arguing, a mediator was not necessary, in order to the salvation of men; &c.

Ans. He has wholly overlooked the argument. I do not say 'tis inconsistent with the gospel for God to grant favours to men, antecedent to their believing in Christ; but that 'tis inconsistent with the need of atonement for sin by Christ, if men, while unbelievers & enemies to Christ and the atonement, *may do those works*, by which they obtain God's approbation and favourable notice; for this implies pardon and acceptance, *out of respect to their works*, and *purely for their works sake*; which is the same with being justified by their works. If a man can be approved and accepted of God in his person and works, while he has no union to Christ or faith in him; then he is so far accepted, and favoured, *purely out of respect to his good deeds*; and not in the least out of respect to the righteousness and worthiness of Christ. The necessity of Christ's atonement is grounded in man's being in such a state by sin, that he cannot have God's approbation and favourable notice, on account of any thing he can do; even though he should become perfectly holy. If he could, Christ's atonement would be needless. There is a wide difference between God's exercising benevolence to men; and his approving and accepting them and their doings, and taking a favourable notice

tice of them *because* they have done so well. The former is exercised towards men antecedent to their union to Christ; the latter cannot take place, unless they are actually united to Christ, and interested in his worthiness and righteousness, which alone recommends men to the divine approbation and acceptance in their persons and works; for they are *accepted in the beloved*. Antecedent to their believing in Christ, they are condemned and accursed, which is inconsistent with their having God's approbation, and his taking a favourable notice of their doings. If men could be thus delivered from the curse by their own doings and righteousness, there was no necessity of Christ's being made a curse, to deliver them from it: Therefore, as to such, Christ is dead in vain. Gal. ii. 21. Mr. H—y has not said a word to shew the defect of this argument, that I have observed.

But he goes on to make another mistake, and upon this says, the very same objections lie against the sense I put on these passages. For if God treated them as if their conduct was right and acceptable to him, having respect only to their external conduct, without searching their hearts, he did this, either on account of Christ's mediation, or not. If not, then all the consequences follow from this, which I have mentioned as following from his interpretation. If he in this has respect to Christ's mediation, his doctrine is as vindicable, on this principle, as mine. He concludes thus, 'Plainly then, when he will tell us how it can be reconciled with the divine purity to speak of, and conduct towards, sinners, not as the searcher of hearts, but merely according to their visible behaviour; and clear his own hypothesis from the consequences he draws from the doctrine he opposes; then I suppose a man of his discernment, or even half an eye, will easily see that the doctrine he opposes may in the same way be as well vindicated.' P. 155.

Ans. God, in treating them, not as the searcher of hearts, but according to their visible profession and conduct,

duct, had respect to them, and expressed his approbation of them, considered as interested in the atonement, or as his servants truly devoted to him; which was true, if their hearts were answerable to their external appearance. Since he really accepts and approves of all true penitents, purely for Christ's sake; he visibly approved of them who were visibly penitents, and devoted to him, or appeared to be interested in the atonement.

Mr. H—y has got to shew, it will follow from hence, that God may as well manifest his approbation of men's characters and doings, considered as impenitents, and not united to Christ. At present I believe he who has not so much as *half an eye* is most likely to attempt it.—While we treat men according to their visible appearance, we are obliged to take a favourable notice of and love him who professes subjection to Christ, purely for his sake, without knowing his heart, but treating him as if it was answerable to his profession. If any one should hence infer, that we may, with as great propriety, manifest the same approbation and love to those who are visibly unbelievers, and bear no particular relation to Christ, he would argue as Mr. H—y does, if he understands my argument. The way is now prepared to see with how much propriety he introduces the following words: ‘Methinks it is somewhat odd, first to deny and dispute against *the fact*, viz. *That God expresses his approbation of some actions of sinners, and grants temporal rewards to them because of such actions*, and then immediately suppose the same fact, and introduce a scheme to account for it, or shew it to be consistent with the divine perfections, and the truth of the gospel.’ I at present think it *somewhat more than odd* that a gentleman of his abilities should be so much in the dark in so plain a case.

I shall finish this head by observing, that in the passages under consideration, and others of the like kind, there is as much evidence from the expressions themselves, that they did the whole of their duty, as that they really did
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any part of it. And Mr. H—y is very arbitrary, having nothing in these expressions or any where else to warrant him, in asserting the meaning is, they did *the matter of duty*. Yea we are as certain they did not the matter of duty, as he explains it, as that they did not the whole of their duty, when they are said to do as the Lord commanded; for in order to this, according to him, they must do it in a serious, conscientious manner, with a regard to their duty, and under the influence of the spirit of God; and for ends that are innocent and good. But we have no more reason to think that all the Israelites, or the bigger part, had all this, than that they were all holy. But we are sure they did right, and as the Lord commanded, in appearance, and so far as their external conduct is concerned. Why then should we not be content with the plain, obvious sense, though this be consistent with their really doing no duty; but, as their act, may be an act of rebellion?

His seventh argument is taken from sinners having *encouragement to attend on means* in order to their salvation. He says it hence follows that this is their duty; for ‘God never encouraged any one to do that which was not his duty.’ P. 157—165.

Ans. 1. It has been shewn that the unregenerate do no duty, according to his own account, if self-love is not an innocent and good thing, but is sin, and so far as men act for the end *that* proposes, they act wrong. But this we shall conclude to be true, till some evidence that ’tis not so be produced. Therefore till he has done this, his own scheme must be considered as involved in all the difficulties he thinks he finds in mine. He says, ‘No one must be encouraged to perform duties for such ends as ought not to be proposed, or cannot be attained.’ Sermon. p. 39. But they who act from self-love only, always act for such ends: Therefore ought not to act from self-love. He also says, ‘God’s design in giving these commands (i. e. commands to the unregenerate) are indeed different from

from *theirs* in obeying them ;' and represents every unconverted man 'held by Satan, *under his dominion*,' and 'walking upon enchanted ground.' Ibid. p. 63. Consequently they act for ends which ought not to be proposed, and cannot be obtained, according to his own account. To what then are they to be encouraged ? What duty do they do, while acting from those ends, which ought not to be proposed, by which they are held under the dominion of Satan, and walk upon enchanted ground ? If we strip their actions of all ends, and consider them as doing duty without motive and design, as he sometimes seems to affect to do, we strip them of every thing that is either duty or sin, as has been observed ; and that only remains, to which there can be no encouragement ; for to talk of encouraging men to do that which involves no motive and design, is a contradiction. When Mr. H—y will make his own scheme consistent with itself, and with his doctrine of encouragement, I trust all the difficulties he has attempted to fasten on mine, will be easily removed.

Ans. 2. If it appears from scripture history, and experience, that they are most likely to come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved, with whom most means are used, and who are most engaged to attend, in a sense of their undone, miserable case ; and have the clearest conviction of their true state, &c. Then this is a motive and encouragement to men to attend on these means, so far as future misery is an evil, and eternal happiness is a good in their view, whatever may be their ends in other respects. And if this is all that is meant by encouragement to attend on means, may not a man take this encouragement and act upon it, without doing any duty ? The encouragement in this case does not turn upon the ends he has in view, or the goodness or badness of his exercises and conduct ; but upon this plain fact, that persons in such a situation are more likely to be saved, than

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those in another. One takes the encouragement, and is induced to attend, from bad motives, and for a wrong end; and does nothing but sin; another is influenced by this fact from the best motives, and does his duty; yet it is encouragement to both of them. It is certain, from experience, this fact affords encouragement to the sinner, who dreads damnation, to attend, though he is conscious he attends as a rebel, with a heart wholly opposed to God and all his commands: And will it follow that God encourages him in his rebellion!

Mr. H—y says, ‘It will be impossible to convince those, who view things in any measure as they are, that such a conduct as is not their duty, has any probable tendency to promote their final interest.’ P. 172. It is granted, such conduct has no tendency in itself to promote their salvation. The ground of hope, in this case, is entirely in what God does, many times over-ruling it so as to issue in their salvation. It is impossible for Mr. H—y to prove that a person, sensible that he does no duty, whether he attends on means or not, may not be induced to attend, as the only hopeful way of escaping the evil he dreads; for this is not only contrary to reason, but to many known facts. Many who are convinced they do no duty, but that all the exercises of their hearts are a constant series of horrid rebellion against God, are engaged to attend on means as the most likely way to escape the damnation they dread. And it appears from fact, that the more fully a sinner is convinced that his heart constantly opposes God, and the more he feels the misery of his case, the more engaged he will be in attending on means. And if such could be made to believe that there was no hope for them, but in the way of doing duty, they would sit down in absolute despair.

His eighth argument, which he says is an *important one*, now offers itself. P. 165—199. This is taken from ‘the ends for which the ordinances of the gospel were instituted.’ He says, ‘such an attendance to duties as unregenerate

nerate sinners are capable of, may and does answer some of those ends for which these duties were enjoined. Therefore such obedience is enjoined in and by them.'

Ans. 1. Though God's ends are answered by his commands, and the sinner's attendance on means; and it is sometimes made the occasion of good to him; yet it does not follow that the sinner does any duty. He says the sinner is under the dominion of Satan in all he does, and his ends are different from God's in his institutions and commands. The sinner's exercises and exertions have no tendency, in themselves, to answer any good end. They are all evil, and tend to evil, being opposition to the divine authority and command. When they issue in saving good to the sinner, 'tis wholly owing to the interposing, over-ruling hand of God. The sinner in all his exertions under awakenings and convictions of conscience, while *under the dominion of Satan*, is more like a wild bull in a net, than a submissive, obedient child; and would get out of the hands of God, if he could, and all his strivings are really strivings against God, as they are utterly opposed to submission to him; like the exertions of a wild beast, untamed, unsubdued, in the hands of him who is taking methods to bring him to submission. God uses means with the sinner, suited to bring him to submission, and is pleased to cause them to be successful in some instances; but till the sinner submits he does not comply with God's design, but acts like a rebel in all his exertions. This is the scripture account of the matter. 'The carnal mind is enmity against God. Every one that doth evil *hateth the light*.' Joh. iii. 20. 'He that is not with me, is against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad.' Matth. xii. 30. *

Ans.

* Mr. H—y speaks of the sinner's *waiting on God in the way of his blessing*; and of his *endeavours of obedience*, p. 169, 170. But surely the scripture will not warrant him to apply these expressions to the doings of the unregenerate. They only tend to blind and deceive. Endeavours of obedience suppose the heart is gained and friendly to God

Ans. 2. It is granted that God's institutions and commands, have a tendency to influence the unregenerate; and are designed and used to promote what is called a preparatory work in them; but it does not follow that they, while unregenerate, obey any of these injunctions & commands. Our author says, 'The hearers of the gospel are to be immediately called to believe and repent; and these commands and exhortations are to be enforced with a promise of pardon and salvation, if they comply; and a threatening of damnation if they remain impenitent.' P. 191. And he adds, 'The inculcation of it, by the blessing of God, is a means of good to sinners. The work of conviction and humiliation may, through the influence of the holy spirit, be promoted in them. Hereby they are led into a just view of the misery and danger of a state of sin; and are excited earnestly to implore the mercy of God;—and diligently to attend on all the appointed means of conversion.'—If this is the tendency of inculcating these commands, what need is there of preaching up any other duty short of repentance, to promote a work of conviction, &c. and lead sinners diligently to attend on means? This will answer all these ends to all intents as well; and, I must add, much better than preaching up duties to be done by them while in a state of enmity with God; for this has no tendency to convince the sinner of his true state, of his sin, misery and danger, or thoroughly to awaken him to an engagedness in this matter; but the contrary. I appeal to fact and experience. What persons have appeared to have the most just view of their misery and danger; and to be most in earnest in attendance on means? Are they not such as have been convinced that they are wholly rebels; that they are so far from doing any duty, that all they do is sin; and their hearts constantly rise in rebellion

God and his commands: And *to wait on God*, does in scripture denote faith and trust in him, and promises are made to this. Does the unsubdued rebel, the carnal mind which is enmity against God, ever do this?

on against God ? When sinners come to this conviction, you cannot persuade them that they do any duty, or keep them from a constant attendance on means. And where these doctrines are preached, and sinners are called upon to repent, &c. and taught that they do no duty, while they refuse this, they are as much disposed to be in the use of means, as *they*, at least, who have the contrary doctrine preached to them.

But what is most to the purpose to observe here is, that Mr. H—y has, in this concession, given up the whole of this argument. His argument is, that because the divine commands and institutions are designed to answer ends, with respect to the unregenerate, to promote a preparatory work, &c. therefore they must enjoin duty to be done by them while unregenerate. But he here says, all these ends may be answered by calling on them to repent and believe immediately, on pain of damnation. And by this has sapped the whole foundation of his own argument.

Ans. 3. Mr. H—y allows they do no duty, and have not ‘a next power’ to do any of the duties he pleads for, who have not ‘the inward influence of the spirit of God.’ P. 50, and in many other places. But the institutions and commands of God respect these, as well as those who have the inward influence of the spirit, and are designed to answer ends with respect to them ; and such attendance on means, as they are capable of, may, & does sometimes, answer these ends, and proves the means of their awakening and salvation. Therefore such obedience is enjoined in and by gospel institutions. This argument is built on the same ground on which his stands : But he will not allow it to be good : Consequently must allow us, and ought himself, to have as poor an opinion of his own.

There is something to be done with a sinner, antecedent to his receiving ‘the inward influences of the spirit of God,’ and as a means of it ; and he may do something, viz. read the bible, and hear the gospel preached. And why

why is not this as much duty, as any thing the sinner does, who has the inward influences of the spirit, according to his argument ? Therefore it proves too much, even what he says is not true ; and so proves nothing at all,

He probably made this distinction, and expressly excluded all who have not the inward influences of the spirit from doing any duty, because it would be not a little shocking to represent the openly profane person as doing the matter of duty, when he puts on a serious face for an hour in hearing a sermon, while his heart is as much given to profaneness as ever, and his design is to improve what he hears to the vilest purposes. But they who judge not *according to the appearance, but righteous judgment*, according to the standard of truth, and look on every unregenerate heart full of nothing but thoughts and imaginations, which are wholly evil continually ; of cursing and bitterness ; of enmity against God ; *deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked* ; will be as far from admitting that such do any duty, as he is that any duty is done by the secure and profane. And though he may think it very uncharitable, I am confident that if he had constantly viewed the unregenerate in this scriptural light, his two books wrote to prove and inculcate unregenerate duties, never would have existed. But it is to be observed, that he often forgets this distinction, as well he might, since 'tis so arbitrary, and represents those as doing duty, who can have no pretence to the spirit of God, more than all men on earth, even the whole host of Israel, and the mixed multitude at the red sea, and in the wilderness ; though he says, God, at the same time, ' knew that they were a rebellious generation.' P. 174. And he says the multitude of the Jews did their duty in sitting down to eat, though they were a stupid, carnal generation, and followed Christ, only for the loaves. And his description of the matter of duty in many places is suited to the doings of the most profligate wretch in the kingdom,

dom, though at other times, in contradiction to himself, he expressly excludes such from doing any duty.

This leads me to observe, he says, when Christ directed the Jews to search the scriptures, he must mean a study of the scriptures by the unregenerate, in order to conversion, or their receiving the holy spirit in his sanctifying influences, because they were then unregenerate. But upon the same ground I may say, he means a search of the scriptures, which men may practice before they have 'the inward influences of the spirit of God,' for these Jews had not the spirit in this sense; and must they wait and do nothing till the spirit came upon them? Was it not their duty to search the scriptures, in order to obtain the influences of the spirit? And did Christ direct them to study the scriptures, only on supposition they had the spirit. If he directed them to that search of the scriptures, which they could not perform till they had *the inward influences of the spirit*, which they were then wholly without; why might he not as well mean such a study of them, as implied the holy spirit in his sanctifying influences? Was not the latter as much in their reach as the former? And are not God's institutions and commands as much calculated and designed to bring men to the former, as to the latter? When he will solve these difficulties, and answer these questions, on his own principles, we may safely promise a full answer to all he says on this head, from this passage of scripture, or any other. This, we trust, has been made already. *

Mr.

* Mr. H—y frequently represents that, upon our plan, the unregenerate are not to be exhorted to do any duty, but only *on supposition they are regenerated*; and that nothing is their duty in present circumstances. In this view, he says, p. 171. 'Why do any seek to persuade unregenerate sinners that these things are not their duty?' This is a groundless misrepresentation. While we tell them they do no duty so long as they are impenitent, we have duty enough to urge upon them, and that without making any supposition; and which he himself grants is their *immediate* duty.

But if this representation were just, it might be equally applied to
him

Mr. H—y makes great use of imperfect holiness being prescribed as the means of salvation ; and seems to think this quite sufficient to prove his point, and stop the mouth of most objections against him. His argument seems to be this : If the best of men are imperfect, and do but part of their duty in this world ; and true repentance and faith, however imperfect, are the appointed means of eternal life ; then the doings of the unregenerate are appointed duties, as means of their conversion.

Ans. 1. Real holiness is duty ; and he who exerciseth this, though in an imperfect degree, so far does his duty, and no further. But how does it follow from hence that the unregenerate do any duty ; or that unholiness is prescribed as duty, or means of any thing ? He has not yet made out this consequence, and never will.

Ans. 2. They are required to be perfect in all things ; nor is imperfect holiness prescribed by any command. It is, thro' the grace of the gospel, made a means of salvation, and interests in all the blessings of the covenant of grace ; but every injunction and command requires perfect holiness, as much as any degree of it. The lowest degree of holiness is in some degree obedience to the command, though 'tis not required as thus imperfect ; and divine grace pardons the imperfection and sin for Christ's sake, to whom the lowest degree of true faith in him unites the believer. But still, how does it follow from this, that what has no degree of holiness is any part of duty, or prescribed as a means of conversion ?

Under this argument he undertakes to correct '*a notable mistake,*' which, he says, I have made, in representing that some suppose, and argue from it, as an undeniable

him, and it might be said, he finds no duty for them to do, who have not received the inward influences of the spirit ; and they cannot be exhorted to any, only on supposition they have these influences. How they shall know when they have these influences, he has not told, and perhaps if he should try, he would find it much easier to tell, from the bible, how persons may know whether they have the spirit in his saving influences, than that they have his influences, which are short of it.

ble maxim, 'That whatsoever is said to an impenitent, unregenerate sinner, by way of exhortation or command, can require or propose nothing but what he may do, and yet continue impenitent and unregenerate.'* He says, he knows of none to whom this is applicable. And as, from some of my words on this head, he has reason to conclude I had reference to his sermons, he says I have mistook his meaning, and concludes I have also mistook the meaning of others. P. 183, marg. 189, &c.

ANS. I. I own that when I wrote what he refers to, I did suppose he had taken this for an undoubted maxim in some things he said in his sermons, as well as others in their writings: And I was not alone in this. I was led to this conclusion from his building an argument, for the duties he was pleading for, wholly on this supposition, as I thought. P. 130, &c. he undertakes to prove that the things which the unregenerate may do, while such, are required of them. And he does this principally by citing a number of scriptures, in which there are commands to *bear, search the scriptures, pray, &c.* And all he says to prove these scriptures are to his purpose, and require the doings of the unregenerate, is to observe *they were spoken to such.* Now, if it is not true that nothing but the doings of the unregenerate, or what they may do, while such, is required of them; then these commands, given to the unregenerate, may require not what they do, while such, but what the regenerate only do; so his argument comes to nothing. If I should undertake to prove, from scripture, that a profane drunkard was required to pray, while in the midst of his profaneness and cups; and in order to this should produce a scripture requiring prayer, and only observe this scripture was addressed to profane drunkards; would not every one see I had not proved my point, unless it was certain that nothing is in scripture required of such men, but what they may do while such?

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* See reply to Mr. Mills, p. 133.

And would they not have right to conclude I built on this as an undeniable maxim ?

I knew Mr. H—y offered other arguments, and said many things inconsistent with what I supposed he took for granted here, as the foundation of his argument ; yet this was no evidence that he did not here build wholly on the maxim mentioned : Nor am I able yet to make any thing of his argument on any other supposition. But since he says this was not his meaning, it must be left to the public to judge, who has made the greatest mistake, he, in writing as he has done, or I, in understanding him as I did.

Ans. 2. Though he has undertaken now to ‘state the matter *plainly*, as he understands it ;’ I confess it is not *very plain* to me, though it may be to others. P. 190, &c. For,

1. His argument, as he now states it, proves nothing. The argument is this, if I *now* understand him. There are certain instrumental duties to be done by the unregenerate, and means to be attended upon, in order to conversion. Therefore the scriptures commanding these things, as what they have *a next power to do*, bind these duties upon them. Here the whole thing to be proved is still taken for granted, viz. that there are *instrumental duties* for the unregenerate to do.

2. If his argument proves any thing, it proves too much for himself. If commands to the unregenerate respect all they may do, while such, in attendance on means, &c. and make all this their duty, as they may do it ; then they, who have not ‘the inward influences of the spirit,’ are hereby bound to duty, which they may do, while in this state, and the argument is as strong for these duties as any other. But he himself grants such do no duty. If his way of arguing does not prove they do, it proves nothing.

3. He, in explaining his argument, gives it all up, as has been observed, p. 188, 189. For if, as he asserts,

commands

commands which the unregenerate never obey, while such, are suited to excite them to all those exertions and attendance on means, and produce all those effects, necessary to take place in order to conversion, and always do this, where they take effect; then the necessity of their attending on means, &c. does not infer any command of these things, as they do them; for there is no need of any such command, in order to their doing them.

4. He has, I think, in stating this matter *plainly*, said other things *plainly* inconsistent with themselves. He says repeatedly, it is the *present*, the *immediate* duty of the unregenerate to repent and believe the gospel, &c. And yet, in the midst of all this, he asserts 'God has not enjoined on any the impracticable task of exercising supernatural powers or principles, before they are furnished with them, as the means of obtaining any blessings temporal or spiritual. To prescribe impossible means would be the same thing as to prescribe none. Faith and repentance are means of salvation only to those who are enabled to believe and repent.' P. 191. ||

Perhaps I have made another *notable mistake* for Mr. H—y to correct: But if I have not, these are not only inconsistencies, but he has here asserted the very doctrine I had said some held, and was implied in the argument abovementioned; which he represents to be a notable mistake. For according to this, God does not enjoin any thing on the unregenerate in order to their salvation, which they may not do while unregenerate. Upon this ground his argument, from the scriptures abovementioned, stands good; and we may be sure that whatever the scripture directs sinners to, in order to salvation, it is something they may do while unregenerate.

And

|| Agreeable to this, he in his sermons quotes with approbation the following sentence. 'God does not command impossibilities; but in commanding, directs sinners to *do what they can*, and to seek and endeavour to do what they cannot.' P. 199, marg. i. e. God does not command the unregenerate to do any thing, which they cannot do while such.

And I am yet persuaded he in his own mind built on this as an undeniable maxim, when he wrote his sermons, though he may now think he did not. His argument is conclusive, on this supposition: And why should he not suppose then, what he has asserted now; and that even while he is declaring he holds no such thing?

4 He here asserts a certain connexion between what the unregenerate may do, and salvation; which he had repeatedly said, we have no warrant to assert from scripture, and has declared his belief of the contrary. His words are, 'God's denying special and effectual grace to those who are favoured with the outward means, is a penal consequence of their neglecting to do what they had a next power to do in a way of attendance on means.' P. 193. If so, then none perish who attend on the means as the unregenerate may do. But how does he know this, unless he finds it asserted in the bible? But if it is asserted there, it is the same with a divine promise of salvation to all who thus attend the means. How then can he say, as he does repeatedly, it cannot be proved there are any promises of salvation to the doings of the unregenerate? *

He concludes by saying, 'These observations, it is hoped, may help Mr. H. to understand the principles on which our argument proceeds, better than he appears to have done.' I confess I am not helped; nor does it appear to me that he well understands himself. But perhaps it will be *plain* to others.

His

* Mr. H—y, in his sermons, says, 'I do not plead for a promise of regeneration to the endeavours of the unconverted.' Yet at the same time says the unconverted 'by improving diligently the grace they have received, shall obtain further degrees.' And to this purpose applies the words of Christ, 'Whosoever hath (i. e. holds or improves what he hath) to him shall be given.' This is an absolute promise to that improvement here intended. Therefore if it intends what the unregenerate do, there are promises to the doings of the unregenerate. Moreover, he applies one of the most express promises in the bible to the unregenerate. Matth. vii. 7—10. See p. 106, 107, 108. How these things can be made consistent, I know not.

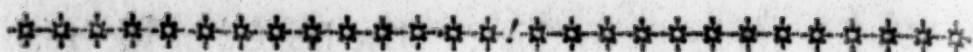
His last argument is this : ' The hearers of the gospel are commanded to repent and be converted that they may be saved ; and this infers an obligation on all to attend the means of conversion. Such commands implicitly require whatever is necessary to be done by us, in order to a compliance with them.' P. 199.

Ans. The command to repent does not infer an obligation to attend on the means of conversion in an impenitent way, or with a heart wholly opposed to repentance ; nor is this necessary in order to a compliance with the command, unless opposition to the command is implied in the command, and is the means of obedience to it. But the doings of the impenitent are impenitent doings, and wholly opposed to repentance and conversion : Therefore are not implied in the command to repent, &c. so far from this, that they are altogether disobedience to the command. §

I know Mr. H—y will come in here with his *dividers*, and say, impenitence and unbelief ' are not required as *adjuncts* or *qualifications* of mens attendance on means ; but the *attendance itself* is absolutely required of men.' But when he has separated the adjuncts and qualifications of their doings from the attendance itself, there remains nothing to be required or forbidden, that is duty or sin, as has been shewn.

SECT.

§ This is, I think, sufficient to shew I was not guilty of the inconsistency he thinks he finds in what I have wrote on this head, p. 199, 200, marg. But this is left to the reader.



S E C T I O N III.

*A brief reply to Mr. Hemmenway's answer to my arguments,
proving the unregenerate do no duty.*

MY first and chief argument to prove the unregenerate do no duty was taken from Matth. xxii. 37—40. and Rom. xiii. 8—10. Christ mentioning love to God & our neighbour as required in the first & second commands, says, 'On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.' I thought it hence followed that all required in the law and prophets is love; And that this inference was supported and fully asserted by Paul, when he says 'love is the fulfilling of the law;' and then enumerates a number of commands of the second table, and says, all these, and every other command, are briefly comprehended in this saying, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*. Therefore, since the unregenerate do not love God or their neighbour, they do no part of their duty, nor yield the least true obedience to any command.

Mr. H—y is so far from admitting this argument to be conclusive, that he takes much pains to overthrow it, and *says* these passages will prove directly the contrary. His opposition to the sense I put upon the words of Christ, is grounded on the words Mark mentions, as spoken by our Lord with respect to these two commands, viz. 'There is none other commandment greater than these.' He says this necessarily implies there were *other commands*, besides those which require love.

Ans. He has not proved, nor will he ever do it, that these words imply there are any other commands. Both may be true, that there is no other command greater than these; and that there is no other command which is not comprehended in these. If there is no other command,

mand, but these imply the whole ; then certainly there is none greater. And it appears from comparing the evangelists, that our Lord asserted both. First, that there is none greater ; and secondly, that in truth these comprehend the whole that is required of man ; 'On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.' As if he had said, 'There is no other commandment *greater* than these ; and indeed these are the whole of the law and the prophets ; all *depend* on these, and they comprise the whole. *

But he further says, There is nothing in the expression used by our Saviour, 'On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets,' that so much as intimates that every command in divine revelation really requires nothing but true love. P. 127.

Ans. 1. If there is any command which does not require love, and is not fulfilled by love, it cannot be said to hang or depend on these two commands, which require nothing but love. Whatever depends wholly on these commands, would be wholly abolished, or cease to be a command, if these commands should cease. But if love, and nothing else, is the fulfilling of every thing required in the law and the prophets, these words are suited to express

* It is said 'The LORD is greater than all gods,' Exod. xviii. 11. But who ever supposed this implied that there were other gods besides JEHOVAH ? Or that this expression is inconsistent with its being said, 'There is no God besides me. We know that an idol is nothing in the world ?' Both these assertions are true, though more is asserted in the latter, than in the former.

He says, 'A part of any thing cannot be called another thing than that in which it is contained.' P. 122. Ans. This is a contradiction to his whole scheme. For he says holiness is a compound made up of many parts ; and that the matter of duty is a part of holiness ; and yet asserts, this is *another thing than that in which it is contained*, viz. unholiness. See p. 4. But it seems he has now altered his plan on which he first set out. *Then* he allowed there was no command that did not require holiness, and corrected me for stating the question as if this was denied. But *now* he is proving there are other commands than those which require holiness. 'Here I must refresh our author's memory, which seems (*not*) a little to have failed him.'

press this. Therefore this is the sense in which they must be taken ; especially as the same thing is asserted in other passages of scripture ; and appears every way reasonable. — When Christ says, ‘ Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them : For this is the law and the prophets.’ Matt. vii. 12. he expresses the same thing, with reference only to the second command of love to our neighbour. What is here commanded, all grant, is to love our neighbour as ourselves. And how is this the law and the prophets ; unless it be that this is the thing inculcated in the law and prophets ; so that he who comes up to this, does all required in them, so far as they respect our duty to our neighbour ?

And when Paul says, ‘ If I have no love, *I am nothing*,’ 1 Cor. xiii. 2. he expresses the same thing ; for how could this be true, if the law and the prophets were any thing aside from love ? When Christ says, ‘ He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings,’ Joh. xiv. 24. what could be a more express declaration, that there is no obedience where there is no love ? Mr. H—y, in order to support his scheme, must prove that he who loveth not Christ may keep his sayings. I know that he can easily do this, in the way he proves almost any thing, by his *sensu composito*, and *sensu diviso*. But whether he can do it consistently with *common sense*, let them judge who are willing to make use of it.

Ans. 2. Mr. H—y says ‘ The love of God and our neighbour is spoken of in scripture as a kind of summary of the duty of man.’ P. 35. He also says, ‘ We do indeed allow that nothing is required as duty, but what is either implied in the affection of love, or is a fit way of exercising and expressing it ; nothing which may not be considered as comprehended in love.’ * P.

125

* Our author says, ‘ Had our Lord thought that those two commandments contained all, he would have said, there is no other commandment besides these.’ P. 122. He here grants they do in truth contain

125. In these words, I think he grants the whole he is disputing against. For if love is a summary of the duty of man, then this comprizes the whole of his duty, and he who does not love, does no duty. And if nothing is required as duty but what is implied in love, or a fit way of expressing it, or comprehended in it; then that which does not imply love, and is not an expression of it; is not required, and is no duty.

Ans. 3. The apostle's words are so plain and express, that they cannot be evaded. He says love fulfils the law; which could not be true if the law required any thing besides love. He enumerates a number of commands, and says all these, and *every other* command, is comprehended in that, *thou shalt love*; therefore love fulfils the law, does all that is commanded.

I have such an opinion of our author's abilities that I do not think he has pleased himself in his attempt to evade the force of this passage. To me it appears so futile and frivolous, as neither to need or deserve an answer. And the boasting flourish he makes in the conclusion, p. 132, seems rather to be the effect of the weakness of his argument, than the contrary. But of this, 'let such as exercise their *reason* judge.' *

C c

He

contain all; and I conclude he will not deny our Lord *thought* this to be truth. And doubtless he expressed himself perfectly agreeable to this truth, though Mr. H—y thinks it 'a gross impropriety of language,

* He says, it plainly appears, that there are other duties we owe to our neighbour besides love, from the apostle's own words, 'Owe no man any thing, but to love one another.' Since 'the apostle here distinguishes between rendering to all their due, and loving one another. He compares and *opposes* these different duties to each other.' P. 130. I believe none ever before heard of duties which *oppose* each other. If there are any such, it is certainly impossible to do them both at the same time; as the one must be a holy duty, and its opposite a *sinful* duty. The apostle says, the command, *Thou shalt not steal*, is fulfilled by love. If by this we are commanded to pay our just debts, then it requires us to owe no man any thing; consequently this is fulfilled by love. How then can these be distinguished as *different and opposite duties*? This I mention as a specimen of his way of
arguing

He says, 'It does not appear that love is ever used in
' so extensive a sense in the scriptures, as to include all
' those acts of external obedience which flow from it.'
P. 126.

Ans. Paul says it includes all that is commanded in
the divine law, as this is all fulfilled by love; and none,
I suppose, will deny that acts of external obedience are
commanded. Yea, he particularly mentions a number of
commands requiring external obedience, and expressly
says, love includes all this obedience. And does not
John speak of love as including external acts when he
says, 'Let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but
in deed, and in truth?' 1 Joh. iii. 18. Is not to *love in
deed*, to love in external action, i. e. in doing acts of love
and mercy? Again, he says, 'This is the love of God,
that we keep his commandments.' Chap. v. 3.

As a further evidence that he who does not love, does
no duty, nothing that is commanded, I observed, that when
the people of Israel appeared by their openly wicked con-
duct to have no true love to God, they are represented as
doing nothing that was required of them, while they at-
tended the temple service, offered sacrifices, &c. God
calls all their offerings *vain oblations*, and says, 'Who
hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?'
Isai. i. 12, 13.

To this Mr. H—y says 'We have no reason to think
' that their attendance on the externals of religious wor-
' ship is here called an abomination, and what was not
' required of them, merely or principally because they
' were unregenerate.' P. 203.

Ans. We have reason to be certain this was because
they appeared to have no love to God or their neigh-
bour, and discovered themselves to be his enemies, which
is true of all the unregenerate, and of no other.—To sup-
port his observation, he says, 'At other times, when the
' Israelites
arguing on this head. I think we may borrow his language with
propriety here (p. 34) 'Such metaphysical flights are, I believe, be-
yond the reach of most.'

‘ Israelites attended the ordinances of divine worship,
 ‘ there is no hint that what they did was not required of
 ‘ them, but the contrary, it is repeatedly said *they did ac-*
 ‘ *cording to the commandment of the Lord*, though they act-
 ‘ ed not from a principle of true holiness.’

Ans. At these other times, they put on the appearance and profession of God’s people and servants, and were visibly holy ; for though they were guilty of gross, open sins, they professed repentance, and reformed, and were again restored to good standing, as in the case of making and worshipping the golden calf. But the people to whom Isaiah speaks, refused to reform, though God had been using means with them to this end ; therefore *appeared* to be impenitent enemies to God.

He thinks I have here fallen into a contradiction to myself. I had said, ‘ God, in his conduct toward the people of Israel, and in what he says of them, acted not as the searcher of hearts ; but has respect only to their external appearance and conduct.’ Upon this he observes, ‘ If so, it was not the want of inward holiness that was
 ‘ the cause why their religious performances are declared
 ‘ to be an abomination, and not required at their hands ;
 ‘ but it was the irregularity of their outward behaviour.’

Ans. God spake of them and treated them, as being his friends or his enemies, i. e. regenerate or unregenerate, according as they *appeared* in their external conduct. Their outward behaviour was not an abomination any further than it proceeded from a wicked heart. Their attendance on religious worship would not have been represented as an abomination, and what God did not require of them, had they not by their wicked works appeared to have no love to God, and to be his enemies, i. e. unregenerate. Had Mr. H—y understood me, or the text under consideration, would he have thought of finding a contradiction here ?

But he himself does not seem to be satisfied with what he has yet said ; and therefore proceeds to observe, that the
 sacrifices

sacrifices and offerings which are said not to be required, were free-will offerings, which were not commanded. With these they 'overcharged God's altars,' and for this they were reproved.

Ans. This is a mere conjecture, for which there is not the least foundation in the whole passage; but much to the contrary, as any one may see who will read it. Would any one think of such an expedient to get rid of the text, were he not driven to a strait?

Mr. H—y has an answer to my other arguments; but as most he says consists in making and keeping up his favourite distinction, between matter of duty, & the manner, end and design; and duty in a *compound sense*, and in a *divided sense*; which distinctions are, I think, at best unintelligible, and tend to darken, rather than give light to the subject: And if this were not true, they are not to the purpose, if self-love is opposed to duty, as has been observed: I say, since this is the case, I shall not trouble myself or the reader with a particular reply; concluding that every one who will attend, will see that what I have said is a full reply to all he has offered in answer to these arguments.



S E C T I O N IV.

Brief remarks on what Mr. H—y says of the INABILITY of the unregenerate.

HE says, 'I agree with our author that the inability of the unregenerate is a sinful defect, nor have I the remotest view or desire to weaken the foundation of this important truth, but rather to confirm it.' P. 82. I have no disposition to call in question his sincerity in this declaration; but I must take leave to think, however, that he has not made it understandingly, and is so far from

from *establishing* this important truth, that he has not only *weakened* the foundation of it, but taken it wholly away, if what he advances be just. Did it not appear in this light, it would not in the least affect the matter in dispute between us; nor should I think it worth while to take any notice of it, in any other view. And it is difficult, yea impossible, to conceive how he should think his representation of this matter was any thing to his purpose; and that he should make the use of it he does, through his whole book, unless he thought the inability of the unregenerate did excuse them, in some measure at least, from obligations to holy exercises, and rendered them less sinful than if they were not the subjects of this defect. *

He says, the unregenerate are under a *natural inability* to embrace the gospel and be holy, in distinction from a moral inability, it being much more properly called *natural* than a *moral*. That it is an inability of a different kind from that which consists only in the want of a willingness to do a thing, or opposition of will to it, when this may be removed without putting any new principle into the heart; as in the case of the reformation of a profligate: Though he is now unwilling to reform, he may be made willing by persuasion, applying to the principles which he now acts from. Whereas the unregenerate must have *a new principle* put into their heart, in order to their loving God, embracing the gospel, &c. and their inability consists in their want of this principle, and not properly in the

* He indeed declares he cannot tell or conceive, how or why this should be a sinful defect; and that the unregenerate should, notwithstanding their inability, be held bound to do the duty they are unable to do, 'is a point attended with *vast difficulty*; and is perhaps the Gordian knot in revealed religion.' However, since God in his word declares it to be so, his faith rests satisfied upon this testimony, without pretending to see through those difficulties.' P. 29. 30. If this declaration is not, in some measure at least, opposed to that mentioned above, I am much mistaken. And how he, or any one else, can, in this view and sense of this matter, *feel* guilty, and justly condemned to destruction, for not obeying God's law perfectly; and heartily repent, of all such defect, as utterly vile and inexcusable, is quite inconceivable. But of this more hereafter.

the want of a will, and the opposition of their heart to holiness. See p. 10—30.

I take leave to make the following observations upon this.

1. If we consult common sense, and the sentiments and feelings of mankind in general, we shall find they make no such distinction between want of a principle or disposition, by which they are prepared and prompted to will and do any thing, and their unwillingness, or opposition of will to it. If persons have natural capacity for any thing which is looked upon in itself right and reasonable, and nothing is wanting but a will, or a compliance of heart, they are always looked upon bound to do it, or to have such a will and choice; and wholly inexcusable for all defects of this kind. And the further they are from such a choice, and from having any thing in their mind that will be influenced by the motives set before them, the more they are blamed. Nor are mankind wont to form any notion of two different kinds of difficulty or inability in such cases; one consisting in not being willing, while there is a promptitude, or an habitual readiness to will, or a good principle; the other in being wholly without any principle or promptitude to the thing proposed. But when the difficulty lies not in the want of a will, but is such as can not be removed by any good inclination or choice, and is consistent with having a good will, it is always looked upon to be of quite a different kind, and opposite to the other, as it wholly excuses a person, so far as he is under this inability. Therefore to call them by the same name, would be highly improper, and contrary to common sense. †

2. We do not find the least hint of any such distinction in divine revelation; but this matter is there represented agreeable to the common notions and sense of mankind.

There

† He says this inability 'is termed by divines, and has not unfitly been called *Ethico-physical*.' P. 78, 80. But he has given no instruction by this hard name, as he has not attempted to explain it. He will not surely pretend it is more scriptural or intelligible than the word *moral*.

There, as he allows, the unregenerate are represented as being as much bound to perfect holiness, as others. Every thing is required of them, that is required of others, without making the least allowance for any inability they are under : Which could not be, if they were under any *natural* inability to holiness ; or if any thing was wanting but a willing heart.

And the scripture represents the wicked as under no kind of inability to repent, obey God and embrace the gospel, different from that which they are under to do the common actions of life, when their hearts are opposed to them. Therefore their readiness to do the latter, is often mentioned to shew their utter inexcusableness and crime in opposition of heart to the former. God sets before the Jews, the Rechabites obedience to the command of their father, to illustrate and convince them of their great and inexcusable folly and wickedness in not obeying him. Jer. xxxv. And our Lord says to them, 'the Queen of the south shall rise in judgment with this generation, and condemn them ; for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon ; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here.' 'Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky, and of the earth : But how is it, that ye do not discern this time ? Luk. xi. 31. xii. 56. If they were under a different kind of inability to obey God, repent and believe the gospel, from that which men are under to obey men, &c. when they have no will to it, how could these similitudes and representations be just ? Might not they who were reprov'd justly reply ? 'The cases are not similar, the Rechabites had natural principles which being applied to, they might be induced to obey their father : And the Queen of the south acted from principles she had : And men discern the face of the sky, &c. without having any new principles given to them. But we are wholly without any principles by which we can discern spiritual things and obey the gospel, which must first be implanted in us before we can feel any motive to this.

They

They needed nothing but a will, in order to do these things; but *we* want a *power* to repent, &c. being under a *natural* inability. Were it not for this, we would as readily believe and embrace the gospel, as men pursue the affairs of this world.' *

3. As Mr. H—y grounds all he says, on this head, on the supposition that there is a holy *principle*, distinct from all *exercise* of the heart, and necessary in order to all holy acts of the will, and the cause or ground of them; and that unregeneracy, and the inability of sinners to holy acts of will, consist wholly in the want of this inactive, dormant, holy principle; he ought to have offered some proof of this, on which his argument wholly turns, and which he has taken for granted. Though we should not dare to deny this doctrine of *principle*, we must not be blamed for not admitting the force of an argument, which is built wholly on this, without some positive proof of
of

* Mr. H—y says, to represent the inability the unregenerate are under to holiness, as consisting in nothing but the want of a will; or to be of the same kind with that which consists only in the want of a will, when they have principles in their hearts, by application to which they may be made willing, is contrary to the language of scripture: That 'the inspired writers assert not only the want of a will, but of power to that which is holy,' which is denoted by *cannot*. Christ says 'no man *can* come to me.' And he does not remember that the mere want of willingness is ever signified by such words. P. 20.

Ans. Peter and John said, 'We *cannot* but speak the things which we have seen and heard,' when they mean nothing more than want of will, or the opposition of their will to the contrary. Solomon speaks of men to whom God hath given riches, &c. but hath not given them *power to eat thereof*, meaning by want of power, nothing but want of a will. If he had *remembered* such passages as these, he must have been sensible that it is agreeable to the language of scripture to speak of want of a will, and want of power, as the same thing; and that *cannot* means no more than a strong and fixed opposition of will to a thing, when nothing is wanting but the consent of the heart. The scripture constantly speaks of sinner's destruction as owing to their *will*, or not willing. 'Why *will* ye die?' 'Whoever *will* let him come.'

of the existence of such principle, which he has not yet produced. ||

It seems to be impossible to have any conception of such a principle : And we seem to run into contradictions, in our attempts to describe it. Thus he speaks of it as that by which the mind is *biased* to act wisely ; and he calls it a *propensity* and *promptitude* to holy action and the *cause* of it. P. 22, 23, 24, &c. At the same time it is to be distinguished from all acts or exercises of the mind, as being perfectly inactive. But how that which does not act, can be the cause of action ; and how there can be propensity and promptitude to act, while there is not the least activity, or inclination one way or the other, cannot be told, it is likely, by any divine or philosopher ; and will, after all that can be said, *look* like a contradiction.

And if the holy scripture, when examined with this view, shall be found wholly silent about this principle, nothing being there said that expresses or implies any such thing, it is thought it will be difficult to find any good medium of proof.*

4. Mr. H—y's account of the nature and kind of man's natural inability to exercise holiness, and embrace the gospel,

|| Perhaps it will be thought he has proved the necessity of such a principle in order to holy acts in the following words. ' The words *power* and *inability*, have relation to acts. And in order of nature, power is necessary in order to all acts flowing from it ; even as the cause is necessary prior to the effect. To talk of power or inability, whether natural or moral, in any other sense, is *unintelligible jargon*.' P. 17. In answer to this, and all he says about *power*, I refer him and the reader to Mr. West's late *essay on moral agency*, sect. ii. Perhaps when he has well considered this, he will give his own ' talk of power ' as hard an epithet as he has here used.

* I am sensible I shall, by calling in question Mr. H—y's doctrine about principle, expose myself to his censure, as denying original righteousness and sin. See p. 33, 34. But if it cannot be proved to be inconsistent with scripture and reason, to believe that Adam's holiness *first began* in holy exercise : And that corrupt exercises take place in his children, as soon as they exist as his posterity, *of the same nature* with those which took place in him, when he first sinned, though differing in circumstances ; he will not be able to support his charge.

pel, is not consistent with his being under any obligations to this, or in the least blamable for not being holy. How can he be obliged to do that which he is under a natural inability to do ; which defect is not properly a want of will, or opposition of will to holiness ; but is what the will has no concern in ? He says 'tis most properly called natural inability. That 'tis blamable because man has brought this inability on himself by his sin ; i. e. Adam had ability to be holy, but lost it for himself and his children : And because he had it, and lost it, *they* ought to have it, and are now as much to blame for not being holy, as if they had this natural power. But it is impossible to reconcile the reason of a man to this, or to make him feel himself blamable for not doing that for which he has no natural power, even though Adam, or he himself, once had it. All the blame there can be in this case, lies in doing that by which this power was lost, and not in not being holy, after he lost his natural power to be so. Mr. H—y owns he can't account for it, that it should be so, and speaks of it as one of the greatest mysteries in all the bible ; but thinks he is obliged to believe it, because it is revealed. But this is a mystery of his own making. Blessed be God ! there is no such thing revealed in the bible. Men are there blamed only for that which natural conscience will make them feel they are wholly blamable for, when properly awakened. And there is no mystery in it : Persons of the lowest capacity, and children, may understand it, condemn themselves and repent. But a person never repents of neglect of that which he thinks he had no natural power to do, and while he can have no conception how or why he should be blamable. While he views things in this light, and his heart is answerable to his speculations, he will not, he cannot, *feel* himself guilty, even though he thinks divine revelation declares him to be so, and he *says* he therefore believes it.†

Mr.

† Our author will perhaps think this an uncharitable censure of him. It would be so, I confess, if his heart necessarily agreed with his doctrine.

Mr. H—y, being sensible that the account President Edwards gives of natural and moral inability, in his treatise

crine : But as his heart may be, in this respect, better than his head, nothing is censured but his doctrine.

This leads me to take notice of a remarkable instance of my *uncharitableness*, mentioned by him, p. 215, &c. I had said in my reply to Mr. Mills, 'The only reason, I conceive, why any have run into this notion of God's appointing duties to the unregenerate, to be done by them while such, and have not rather been shocked at it, is, that they look on them as in some measure, at least, excusable for not loving God and embracing the gospel; this being above their power, and what they cannot do while unregenerate.' And I had before published a sermon, in which I said, They who have not been brought to see and *feel* themselves wholly inexcusable for not being perfectly holy, have not been convinced of sin, as God's people are. These two passages put together, he says, condemn all without exception as unconverted, who think God has appointed duties to be done by the unregenerate, while such.

Ans. In my sermon I address myself to my hearers in a use of examination, desiring them to consider what are the exercises and feelings of their own hearts; whether they have been brought to feel themselves wholly to blame for the neglect of every thing God's law requires; or whether they are wont to excuse themselves, as not wholly blamable? And I represent the former, not the latter, the character of the Christian.—In my reply, I am not attending to a person's sense and feelings of heart of his own blamableness for not loving God, &c. but the views he has of others in a state of unregeneracy. He may, by the influence of education, &c. imbibe wrong notions respecting the blamableness of the unregenerate, and hold principles inconsistent with their being in the least blamable for not being holy; and be led by this to think and talk of the unregenerate, as in some measure excusable for not loving God, &c. And yet, when he consults his own heart, and his views and exercises with respect to himself, may find he has no excuse *for himself*, that he is not perfectly holy. This, I *charitably* believe, is the case in many instances; and in how many, I don't pretend to say. I hope therefore to be acquitted from the charge Mr. H—y has laid against me here, of the 'uncharitable judgment expressed concerning all differing from me in sentiments on this point,' of which he says, '*I do not remember ever to have met with so hard and extensive a censure.*' And adds, 'This is a sample of the spirit he shews towards all differing from his opinion. The lump is thoroughly fermented with the same *sour leaven.*' Hard, severe, extensive censure! Not of my sentiments, but of my *spirit*.

He says, 'That there are some who hold to *this* notion on reasons different from what is here assigned, he may now inform himself.'

Where

tise on the will, is opposed to his scheme, attempts to confute this great author, P. 11—22.

He professes to give Mr. Edwards's definition of natural and moral inability; but has not done it fairly. He says the first is defined to be 'An inability to do a thing, because what is most commonly called nature, does not allow of it, or because of some defect or obstacle that is extrinsic to the will,' &c. This he can't understand, because he is 'utterly at a loss what is commonly called nature;

Where shall I go for information? Not to Mr. H—y; for he declares he cannot see how the unregenerate are blamable for not loving God; as they *cannot*, being under a natural inability; Of which sentiment he makes great use through his whole book.

He does not conclude his note without expressing *his charity*, as a contrast to *my uncharitableness*, in the following words; 'I can say, with sincerity concerning him, (though he may hereafter twit me with it, as he has done by Mr. Mills, in the like case) *I charitably hope that he is a true servant of Christ*: Though I must add, that Christians would regard him with more complacency, if his discourses favoured more of that meekness of wisdom, recommended by the apostle. *I may not imitate him in his hard censures, for I fear God.*'

I hope I shall be acquitted from this charge of *hard censures* by the reader; or, at least, that what I have said will not be looked upon to be inconsistent with my having the fear of God before my eyes, though Mr. H—y, it seems, thinks it to be so.

The following observations offer themselves upon reading this sentence.—*A true servant of Christ, who does not fear God*, if this were possible, is not a character very honorable to him or his master. If it is a *hard censure* to rank a person among those who do not fear God, and such censures are inconsistent with fearing God; then Mr. H—y, while he is expressing his charity, does pronounce a hard censure on him towards whom he is so charitable; and while he is declaring that he fears God, is doing that which he at the same time intimates is inconsistent with it.—But all this is left to the reader, wishing there had been no occasion for any thing which is in such a degree personal.

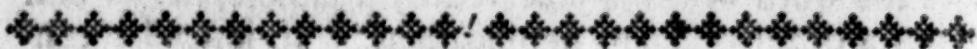
I acknowledge myself greatly defective in meekness of wisdom, and doubt not my discourses would favour more of this, had I more of it. Where this defect appears, or that which is contrary to wisdom and humility, as it doubtless does, in some instances at least, I ask the candor and forgiveness of the offended, Christian reader. With how much *meekness of wisdom* Mr. H—y has corrected *my pride*, I cheerfully leave to every reader's judgment, as others are better judges of this, than I am, and this saves me the trouble of remarking on any thing of this kind; and if I should, different readers will, after all, judge differently: And the point in dispute turns not at all upon this.

ture ; a word which is observed by a philosopher to bear about a dozen different significations.' If, instead of consulting his philosopher, he had read the page preceding Mr. Edwards's definition, where he particularly shews what is commonly meant by nature, he could have been at no loss about the meaning. This looks like perfect quibbling. Besides, he has left out of the definition, the words of Mr. Edwards, which are most plain, and serve to fix the meaning beyond dispute. Mr. Edwards's words are ' We are said to be *naturally* unable to do any thing, *when we can't do it if we will*, because what is most commonly called nature don't allow of it, &c. i. e. when the difficulty don't lie in the heart or will, but in something else ; so that if there was a willing mind, the difficulty would not be removed. What can be plainer than this ? And as plain is the following definition of moral inability. ' It consists in the opposition or want of inclination,' i. e. all the difficulty or inability lies in this, and nothing is wanting but a willing mind.

Mr. H—y accuses Mr. Edwards of reasoning about moral impotency in a *dark manner* ; but I humbly conceive no more need be said, in order to the judicious reader's having full evidence, that the darkness lies wholly with him, and that his inability to understand Mr. Edwards is of the *moral* kind ; therefore think it needless to attempt a more particular answer.*

SECT.

* Our author's treatment of what Mr. Edwards says on this head, leads me to take notice of something of the same kind in his remarks on a passage in my sermon on Rom. vii. 7. p. 6. I had said, ' The authority of a legislator is exercised and expressed in the threatening to the disobedient, and cannot possibly be expressed in any thing else, or any other way.' And in the next paragraph say, ' The authority of a law lies wholly in the threatening, *or appears and is expressed only in that*, as has been just observed.' Mr. H—y, to answer his end the better, puts together part of two sentences, taken from two different paragraphs ; and then understands the words, ' The authority of a law lies wholly in the threatening' as meaning, ' that the threatening of the law is all that obliges the subject to obedience ; and consequently, if the threatened punishment could be avoided, it would no longer be



SECTION V.

On the evil tendency of Mr. Hemmenway's Book.

MR. H—y has waved the mention of ‘the intolerable consequences’ which appeared to him to be inseparable from my doctrine ; because ‘it might look too much like uncharitableness to dwell on these things.’ P. 202. But it may be questioned whether his charity, in this instance, is according to knowledge. Charity is indeed tender of the person, character, ease & happiness of every man ; but it loves the truth so well, and is so friendly to the

be our duty to obey the law.’ And this, he says ‘is indeed gross hobbism ; the very dregs of antinomianism.’ P. 31, 32.

When I say, ‘The authority of a law lies wholly in the threatening, or appears and is expressed only in that,’ I meant by the last part of the sentence to explain the former, and express the same thing in other words. However inaccurate the expression may be, I believe no intelligent, candid reader, who attends to the whole passage, will be likely to mistake my meaning, viz. that the authority of a legislator *appears and is expressed*, in his law, in the threatening only.—But he disputes this too, and says, ‘Nor is it true that the authority of the law *appears only* in the threatening.’ His reason is, ‘For then the most unrighteous laws may appear to have as much authority, or right to command obedience, as any.’

Ans, What I assert is, that the authority of a legislator cannot be expressed and appear *in his law*, unless there be a threatening to the disobedient. I grant that unrighteous laws may have this appearance and expression of authority : But it does not follow from this, that there is any other way to *express* authority *in a law*. He who has authority to make a law, must express it in the same way in his law ; yet there are mediums aside from the law, in itself considered, by which it may be known whether this expression and appearance of authority, in a law, is according to truth or not.

He says, ‘The authority of a lawgiver consists in his right to require obedience *under penalty*.’ I ask, how this right, to require obedience under penalty, can be expressed in a law which has no penalty, or does not require obedience under penalty ? When this question is answered, it will perhaps appear that he has not granted all I have asserted.

the general good, that when any one publishes sentiments contrary to important truth, and of a fatal tendency to the souls of men, it will do its utmost to detect the error, point out the danger and evil tendency of it, and give warning to all, how much soever the author's performance and character may suffer by it. Not to do this, would be uncharitable and cruel. I shall therefore think I am obeying the voice of charity itself, in the attempt I am now entering upon. But before I proceed, I give notice that I design not the least intimation that Mr. H—y saw the evil tendency of his scheme, or would desire to promote what I think is the unavoidable consequence of it. But this is so far from being a reason for silence on this head, that it offers a sufficient motive to attempt to open his eyes, and the eyes of all others, who are as far from perceiving the danger, as the author.

I. I think what he has said tends to keep out of sight, and hide from men, their real sinfulness and guilt; and therefore opposes one great end of the gift of the holy spirit, viz. to reprove or convince the world of sin, as necessary in order to understand and embrace the gospel.

He insists 'That sin consists formally and essentially in defect or privation.' P. 8. That this defect, or want of holy principles, is the true cause of the sinfulness of men's actions. P. 64. 'The corruption of human nature consists essentially and radically in a defect or privation of a principle of true holiness. P. 83. * He says, the principles and exercises which are naturally found with men, are not in themselves sinful, but the sin consists in the want of something else; or their corruption consists in not having supernatural principles joined with them. That self-love,

* If sin consists originally and essentially in defect, and this defect is the cause of the sinfulness of men's actions; then this defect was the cause of Adam's first sin. I ask, by what means did this defect take place in Adam? Not by his sin; for this defect was the cause of his sin. But he gives a different account of Adam's sin elsewhere. P. 27, 28. According to him, it consisted in a *voluntary act*, by which he

love, is innocent and good in itself, and men never love their own selves too much, or in too high a degree; § and 'the viciousness of selfishness consists *not at all* in the love of ourselves;—but *wholly* in the exclusion of love to others.' It is never in any degree sinful, unless when want of love to others has influence in men's actions.* i. e. When a man is induced by self-love to 'do that to promote his own interest which is *in his apprehension* inconsistent with the interest of others.' So that if a man has no *design* to injure others, to answer his own ends, & does the matter of duty, his self-love and all he does is as innocent 'as the action of a sucking infant that reaches earnestly for the breast.' P. 71, 95, 96. Therefore all that men are blamable for, is want of a principle of love to God and their neighbour. And this being a natural defect,

and he cast away the perfection and glory of his nature, and 'the habit or principle of righteousness was lost,' and a usurper was placed on the throne. No sinful defect in his nature, or privation of a principle of holiness could be the cause of this positive, sinful act, because this act was the cause of this defect, and the loss of the perfection of his nature. And this was a strange *usurper*, if it was only negative, a defect or privation, that is, *nothing*. I think he ought to have given a more clear and consistent account of that sinfulness which consists wholly in defect and privation (which I take to be the same with its consisting in nothing at all) and is the cause of the sinfulness of men's actions, before he had made such great use of it as he does in support of his scheme.

§ Our author says, 'No action is the worse for being interested, or 'or the better for being disinterested. Disinterested mischievousness imports the utmost wickedness. And it was no ways derogatory to 'our Saviour's submission to the will of God in his sufferings, that he 'endured the cross for the joy that was set before him.' P. 98. These are three as remarkable sentences, perhaps, as were ever put together. Nothing can be more contrary to truth and holiness than the first. The second supposes what is impossible. And so does the last; and is most dishonorable to our saviour, if his pleasing not himself, & his disinterested love, was excellent & honorable. For this, the reader is referred to the preceding inquiry; especially, p. 28—31.

* Mr. H—y says, 'It may seem strange to those who are unacquainted with *metaphysics*, that a defect or privation should be spoken of as a formal principle, which has an influence in it's kind in-
to an action.' P. 71. If he can by his *metaphysics* prove this, he will

and they under a natural inability, independent of their will & choice, to act from higher principles, & love God, &c. their sinfulness does not lie in this defect, in itself considered, or in any of their neglects or doings; but in their losing their power in Adam: For, according to him, if Adam had not possessed this superior principle & power, & cast it away by his voluntary act, his children could not be under the least obligation to holiness. But that men should now be bound to love God and be perfectly holy, when they have no principles, or natural power to do this, merely because Adam had them, & cast them away, he says, is the most difficult to be understood & accounted for, of any thing contained in the bible; and if it is believed, it must be merely because 'tis revealed, and not from any inward consciousness we have of our sinfulness and blame, from any inward sense or feeling, or from our seeing the reason of it; for these unitedly declare, under all imaginable convictions of conscience and illuminations of the mind, there is no sinfulness in that, in which *all* sinfulness and blame do consist, if they are to be found in man.

This scheme of our author does almost, if not wholly, exclude sin and blame from man, in his present state. He whose heart is formed on this plan, will feel himself in a great measure innocent, and have little sin to confess and repent of. This is very agreeable to unsubdued, impenitent, secure sinners, & answers to their views & feelings, & the very scheme they naturally fall into, to excuse and justify themselves. But when the law comes, sin revives, and they die. They find that *every imagination of the thoughts of their hearts is only evil continually*. That they are *abominable and filthy, drinking in iniquity like water*—That *their heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked*—*Their throat is an open sepulchre; with*

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will at the same time prove what has been often asserted, viz. that men by metaphysics can prove any thing, even the grossest contradictions, to be true. He adds, what all his readers will doubtless believe, 'To open this matter *fully* would carry us *too great a length* into some *abstruse disquisitions*.'

*their tongues they have used deceit ; the poison of asps is under their lips ; their mouth full of cursing and bitterness : Their feet swift to shed blood ; being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate ; and their heart full of enmity against God. **

It is doubtless impossible to reconcile this scriptural representation of man's sinfulness, with Mr. H—y's scheme. Indeed, he has, through his whole book, kept the sinfulness and guilt of man very much out of sight ; and the whole is suited to sooth and please the impenitent, unconvinced sinner ; and is opposed to that conviction of sin and humiliation which are implied in a man's knowing his true state and character, and necessary in order to embracing the gospel. †

II. Mr.

* *The carnal mind is enmity against God.* This seems to be a difficult text with Mr. H—y ; and no wonder, since it is opposed to his whole scheme. He refers to it, p. 20, and there understands it as meaning a state of unregeneracy, or depraved nature. But in express contradiction to this, in p. 97, he says, 'That which is here called enmity is not the carnal heart or depraved nature ; but the actual exercise of the heart as depraved.' And here, I think, he runs into another inconsistency. He says, p. 95, 96, the exercises of self-love, in the unregenerate sinner, in which 'his design is not to hurt others, but to advantage himself, can, with no propriety, be called exercises of enmity to God or man ; the action of a sucking infant, that reaches earnestly for the breast, might as properly be called an exercise of enmity to being in general.' And yet in the next page he allows 'the exercises and actings of natural principles, as corrupted by sin, are unconf ormable to the law of God, and so are *constructively*, at least, enmity against God, *since* they are at best destitute of that rectitude and holiness of principle and end which the law requires.' Thus that which in one page is perfectly innocent, and cannot be enmity to God, is in the next page constructive enmity at least. But no one has any reason to be frightened with this *constructive enmity* ; for he goes on to say, 'It does not consist in exercise, but in *privation* of right principles and ends in acting. Take this exercise of the natural principle entirely away, and the sinfulness of the person remains undiminished.' So the enmity of the carnal mind turns out a mere nonentity at last ; such enmity as a beast or tree may have.

† It is probable Mr. H—y did not view his own scheme in the light in which I have here set it. And if he should think I have made a representation injurious to him, I can only appeal to his book, and say

II. Mr. H—y's book tends to give sinners ease short of Christ; to prevent that humiliation which is implied in embracing the gospel; and flatter and confirm them in that self-righteous way, which is most pleasing to their hearts, and in which we have reason to fear multitudes are perishing.

This appears from what has been just observed of his hiding from the sinner his true sinfulness and guilt: For nothing will humble the sinner, and strip him of his confidence in himself, and his self-righteous pleas and attempts, and bring him to feel the utterly helpless, lost state he is in, while his true sinfulness & guilt are hid from his eyes. But our author does more than this. He tells the awakened sinner, he is not wholly a rebel and an enemy to God; but is obeying him, and doing his duty in some measure, by which he obtains God's approbation and favourable notice. This is what the sinner, when he is first awakened, desires above all things; and so long as his heart does not fail him here, he will take courage in his opposition to Christ, in attempting to obtain a righteousness of his own. And nothing will drive him from this refuge of lies, this self-righteous bottom, but a conviction that he is so far from doing duty, and obeying God, that he is continually, with his whole heart, opposing God and the gospel, and that he never shall do any duty, till his heart is subdued, and he is willing to embrace the gospel. This is the voice of scripture and reason. And for the truth of it, I might appeal to the generation of God's people. How many are there to witness, that so long as they could flatter themselves they were doing duty, they had ease and self-confidence. But while they were attempting in this way to save themselves, they were disappointed and confounded: Their sinfulness was so brought into

say I have been careful not to misrepresent any thing, and really think the judicious reader of what he has wrote, will see much more opposed to a proper conviction of sin, than I have mentioned. And since I have not injured him, *in my own apprehension*, he must, I think, on his own principles, consider me as quite innocent.

into view, that their hearts failed them, and they saw they were not obedient, but rebels in all their exercises and doings, *sin revived and they died*. And how many are there, who have never come to this conviction; but are going on, as they think, in the way of duty, doing all they *can*, or what they have a *next power* to do, *compassing themselves about with sparks that they have kindled*! These will be greatly comforted and strengthened by what Mr. H—y has wrote.

In the scripture, a different method is taken with sinners. Our author has not, I think, found one exhortation there to any duty short of faith and repentance, after all his search and attempts; nor one word that implies that the unbeliever does any duty: But there is much there to the contrary. They who are not turned to God, are not spoken of as *obeying and doing duty*; but are treated as wholly rebels, altogether *disobedient*. 'To turn the *disobedient* to the wisdom of the just.' Luk. i. 17. '*Children of disobedience*.' Eph. ii. 2. 'Being abominable and *disobedient*, and unto every good work *reprobate*. *Disobedient*, serving divers lusts, living in malice and envy, hateful, & hating one another.' Tit. i. 16. ii. 3. I therefore think I have warrant to say, in my turn, 'If he could have submitted his reasonings to the wisdom of God speaking in the scriptures, great part of his performances would never have seen the light.' P. 148.

It is to be wished and hoped, however, that what he has wrote, and all these disputes, though in themselves disagreeable, will be the means of detecting hurtful error; and discovering the true character of sinners, given in the holy scripture, and the way of treating with them, there pointed out. So far as this shall come to pass, *man* will be abased, and God alone will be exalted, and have all the glory.

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